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WHOSE BELT IS TO BE TIGHTENED?

IF the Opposition expected that the new Chancellor would avow disagreement with the mildness of Mr. Dalton's Autumn Budget or show signs of sharing Sir John Anderson's belief in the case for the gradual elimination of expenditure on food subsidies they were disappointed. In his speech on Monday Sir Stafford Cripps observed rightly that inflationary pressure is greatest in the market for capital goods; that pressure of "excess" purchasing power can be countered not only by disinflation but by increased production; and that food subsidies are a material factor in the Government's policy to make rationed food available for all sections of the community. This shocked the Tories; and, between now and next April, when Sir Stafford will present a Budget of his own framing, every effort will be made to persuade the Chancellor that his "all for export" plan cannot be carried out effectively unless working-class belts are tightened by raising substantially the cost of essential foodstuffs.

It is not enough to reply that such a policy would involve the risk of setting in motion a real spiral of inflation through demands by the trade unions for compensatory wage increases, or to ask what guarantee there would be that, if it came to a competition between family meals and modest indulgence in smoking and drinking, children's diet might not be the first victim of disinflation. As the shortages in supplies for the home market which are implicit in the Cripps Plan become more acute, the case for a proportionate slimming of purchasing power will become more plausible. It is imperative, therefore, that the Labour Party should think straight on this vital issue of maintaining stability of "essential" prices, and should make it plain to the electorate that the Tory demand for the abolition, by stages, of the food subsidies represents, in fact, a claim that the rich should be increasingly absolved from contributing to the national crisis.

Attempts will be made to create the impression that the cost of basic foods must be allowed to rise in order to restrict imports which we cannot afford. This is a complete fallacy. The great bulk of the imports attributable to mass purchasing power can be, and are, regulated by ration-scales, points and clothing coupons; consumption of tobacco can be restricted without recourse to "rationing by the purse"; and the imported raw materials absorbed in meeting working-class demands for unrationed, semi-durable consumers' goods is trivial. Though the purchasing power of the working class is large in the aggregate, the ability of the individual working-class family to draw on the market in "non-essentials" is small, and is already being rapidly diminished by rises in the cost of transport and other services, of vegetables, fruit and many subsidiary foodstuffs, of everyday articles on which higher purchase tax is now imposed, and of no-longer-subsidised footwear and utility clothing. If the Chancellor considers that it is imperative to check the "misdirection" of purchasing power against which the disinflationists inveigh, he should have little difficulty in discerning that labour, plant and materials are diverted from manufacture for export into the satisfaction of domestic consumers' needs, not by the few shillings which working-class families can afford to spend each week on "marginal goods" but by the pressure of accumulated wealth, corporate and individual.

The fact is that food subsidies, financed by taxation, are simply one means of redistributing wealth internally; and it is noteworthy that the *Economist* which, with *The Times*, is taking the lead in the campaign to cut the food subsidies, is now falling back on the argument that their abolition or drastic curtailment would obviate the need for high, "disincentive" taxes. Where does this argument lead us? We have never believed that high taxation has a real disincentive effect on the capitalist *entrepreneur*—if that be the correct term to apply to managing directors of large-scale enterprises whose salaries and generous tax-free expense-accounts ensure them substantial comfort of living in addition to the enjoyment of power and privilege. The cases in which high direct taxation is disincentive are those in which additions to earned incomes depend directly on *personal* effort—the cases of certain classes of manual and technical workers and (it may be) of artists and writers. There might therefore be a strong argument in favour of saving, say, £200 millions on food subsidies if an identical amount were given back in increased income tax allowances (notably for married couples and children), provided always that a new scale of surtax, starting at perhaps £500 of taxable income, were imposed, so as to ensure that relief from direct taxation thus accruing to the higher income levels did not go to swell their already sufficient, or more than sufficient, purchasing power.

But note: whatever it might do to give added incentives to greater personal effort, juggling with food subsidies and direct taxation on these lines would do nothing whatever to diminish the public's total purchasing power or to prevent domestic consumers acquiring goods which might otherwise be available for export. What *The Times* and the *Economist* want—and we challenge them to deny it—is a net reduction in purchasing power which falls predominantly on the working class. By abolishing food subsidies the cost to a family of four of rationed foodstuffs would be increased by 12s. 6d. a week; the compensatory benefit of a reduction in the standard rate of income tax by 3s. 3d. would be negligible in the case of a working-class family of this size, but to the surtax payer it would be colossal.

As Chancellor of the Exchequer and as architect of Britain's economic plan, Sir Stafford Cripps has a unique opportunity to make finance the servant and not the master of production. He can draw encouragement to-day from the fact that coal output is rising, and that workers in steel and other key industries are putting their backs into an effort to produce more. The one sure way to destroy that spirit would be to yield to the selfish clamour of the wealthy and their press that they alone should escape austerity. The greatest possible disincentive against harder work and higher production would be a feeling on the part of the working class that they were being called on to work and want in order to make this a land fit for millionaires to die in.

The President's Message

Mr. Truman's plans for dealing with American inflation are bolder than was expected, and the first reaction of the Republican Congress is frigid. Wage and price controls have assumed a political significance, out of proportion even to their economic importance, as symbols of the "police state" (Mr. Truman's phrase) to which the American way of life is opposed. There is already talk, therefore, of "destroying freedom at home to preserve it abroad," and many Americans will doubt the value of this bargain. It is extremely unlikely at present that Congress will provide the essential price controls for which the President has asked; but, in that case, the Democrats reckon that high prices, which will be the main issue at the next election, can be blamed on the Republicans. The traditional Republican reply to this charge, which has been, and will be, made by Senator Taft, is to blame the Democratic Administration for having been unduly lavish in foreign expenditure. As a result, the bi-partisan support for the European Recovery Programme may be destroyed in the next few weeks. Immediate stop-gap aid will doubtless be given; but, when the full outline of the long-term plans is placed before Congress by the President, there will certainly be a strong demand to cut the global amounts by 30-50 per cent. on the grounds that the country cannot afford to give more without "wrecking the U.S. economy," *i.e.*, making controls essential. The Harriman Committee, on which there were many Republicans, was emphatic that "any substantial programme of foreign aid is inflationary." The battle is now joined in the country, with both sides appealing to the people to wire their views to their Congressman.

Polarised Europe

Increasingly the pattern of Europe is being pulled into the shape of violence by the magnetism of opposed poles. In France the immediate question is how far parliamentary democracy can survive the clash provoked by American determination to preserve French "liberties" and an equal determination on the part of the Communists to resist what they denounce as American domination exercised through the agency of an alliance between pliant Right-wing Socialists, *Vichyssois* reactionaries and General de Gaulle. The spreading strikes—in the ports, in the Pas de Calais coal mines and in the metallurgical industries round Paris—have a definite look of direct action to secure political ends; but it seems probable that the French Communist Party is staging a demonstration to prove that France cannot be governed without the co-operation of organised labour rather than embarking on the first steps towards revolution by violence. Such a move would play into the hands of the R.P.F.; and, if there were sufficiently convincing proof that the Fourth Republic was being assassinated by the Left, the possibility of positive American intervention in support of a counter-revolution in France could not be excluded. As it is, there is no evidence that the State Department is inclined to "go nap" on General de Gaulle, however greatly they would prefer to see him, rather than M. Thorez, installed in power. Would the General be accommodating towards American plans for Germany? That is a question to which the answer seems to Washington to be dubious; and the State Department would almost certainly favour, for the present, a French Government broadened by the inclusion of more Right-of-Centre elements. Can a "Third Force" coalition take effective shape? Efforts appear to have been made to persuade M. Reynaud to take charge of economic affairs in an administration headed by M. Blum; but the ex-Premier's terms seem to have been more than the Socialist Party could follow. The outcome of the present crisis depends on the extent to which it is still possible to rally "middle-of-the-road" opinion in France in defence of the institutions of the Fourth Republic. But is "a plague on both your houses" a sufficiently dynamic rallying cry?

Dilemma for Social Democrats

In Italy the pattern of events in France is being more or less reproduced, with sporadic strikes and violent clashes between Communist-led workers and the adherents of the Qualunquist and (more openly Fascist) Social Movement parties. The position of Signor de Gasperi looks as precarious as that of M. Ramadier; but, in Italy, there is less likelihood than in France of a *rapprochement* between Socialists and the Catholic Centre. The minority Socialists under Saragat might make common cause with the Christian Democrats, but the majority, under Nenni, are (so far) committed to working-class unity and collaboration with the Communists. Pressure is apparently being exercised from the West in favour of a reunion of the two Italian Socialist Groups with a view to creating the basis for greater Socialist "independence." That such arguments can have a measure of success is shown by the results of the annual conference at Brno of the Czech Social Democrats, who voted Fierlinger out of the presidency, and Erban, the Left-wing leader of the trade union Socialists, of the executive. The voting might seem to indicate that the Czech Social Democrat Party has responded to a pull by events to the Right, so far as leadership is concerned. But it is significant that 21 leading officials of the Party have signed a declaration emphasising that it is the "vital mission of the Party to maintain working-class unity." The final outcome of opposing pulls on Socialist parties in Europe has yet to be decided.

The Trade Agreement

The Geneva Trade and Tariffs Agreement, the terms of which have at last been published, is a curious web of compromise. Upon the warp of an American draft based on the Cordell Hull shibboleth of non-discrimination has been woven a weft of exceptions and qualifications that converts the plain cloth to an elaborately patterned coat of many colours. Most important are the exceptions which allow regulation of imports in order to enable a country to safeguard its balance of payments, to maintain full employment, to avoid serious damage to its own industries, to offset export dumping, and so on. An attempt is made to preserve through all these exceptions as much of the "non-discrimination" principle as can be rescued, and to apply it to State trading as well as to private enterprise. Imperial preferences are allowed to continue, though many are reduced and none may be increased. Without an examination of the immense tariff schedules attached to the agreement, it is not possible to predict its immediate practical effects; and these schedules are not yet available in published form. The agreement, as far as Great Britain, the United States, France, Benelux, and most of the Dominions are concerned, comes into force at the beginning of 1948 and lasts till 1951; but it is intended to be superseded in its general clauses by the International Trade Charter under Uno, which the countries concerned are about to meet and put into shape at Havana. For this country, the important question is whether the agreement will or will not really help towards re-establishing international trade while leaving enough room for manœuvre towards reducing our dollar deficit by means of special arrangements which it condemns in principle, but sanctions in one subordinate clause after another.

Trade Unions and International Unity

The Bureau of the World Federation of Trade Unions, meeting in Paris this week, has been facing an awkward crisis. The American Federation of Labour, hostile from the first, has recently intensified its campaign against the W.F.T.U., especially in Latin America, where it has declared war on the Latin-American Trade Union Federation headed by Tolelano and is attempting to organise a rival Right-wing Pan-American movement. In France, M. Jouhaux has fallen out with the Communist-dominated C.G.T., and his group has been holding minority meetings on its own. Hardly less serious a blow is the refusal of the International Transport Workers' Federation, which is much the most important of the Trade Federations the W.F.T.U. is seeking to absorb, to agree to association with that body. Mr. Deakin, the leader of the I.T.W.F., is also President of the W.F.T.U.; and the American Railroad Brotherhoods, which belong to the I.T.W.F., have thrown their influence against affiliation. Behind all this, of course, lies the question whether an inclusive World Federation of Trade Unions is to-day any more workable than an inclusive Socialist International in face of the ideological conflict between East and West. The British Trades Union Congress has hitherto been the main instrument holding the various movements together through its association with the Soviet Trade Unions; and the American C.I.O. has also been a strong force on the side of unity. But now there are rival currents in the C.I.O., which has left the International Labour Organisation in protest against not getting parity of treatment with the A.F. of L.; and the disputes generated by the establishment of the Cominform and the conflict of views over the Marshall Plan are spreading into the Trade Union field. At Paris this week an attempt is being made to hold the W.F.T.U. together; but this cannot be an easy task in face of the cleavage over the Marshall Plan.

Ceylon

The Ceylon Independence Bill, and the agreements which go with it, will provoke little disagreement in this country. Not only does Ceylon remain in the Commonwealth, but the defence facilities already available for Britain will continue. Thus her new status will in no way be detrimental to the strategic interests of the Commonwealth. Nor are there any difficulties over compensation to European members of the Civil Service—in fact, Ceylon is perfectly willing to retain those who wish to stay and to compensate those who decide to go. It is, however, in Ceylon that disagreement is likely to arise. The new Ceylon Parliament will meet on November 25th. Many Members will find fault with the Bill—mainly in the passages relating to defence. The Prime Minister, whose party numbers only 42 out of the 95 members, will find some difficulty in obtaining a smooth passage for a vote of confidence in his Government in the face of the opposition of eighteen Communists (albeit of three different brands) and of two Congress parties numbering another thirteen. Doubtless, though, his salvation will lie in the disunity of his opponents and in the fear shared by most of the population of being left entirely unshielded from so close and so powerful a neighbour as India.

The Miners' New Minimum

The agreement between the National Coal Board and the Mineworkers' leaders to increase weekly wages by 15s. for underground workers and 10s. for surface workers, with proportionate adjustments for pieceworkers and for juveniles, should lead to better relations in the mines. Nevertheless, the man-power position remains unsatisfactory, and is likely to remain so for some time to come, even if the 30,000 European volunteer workers and the 10,000 orphan boys from D.P. camps whom the N.U.M. has agreed to accept do gradually arrive. Current output, indeed, is better, thanks to the increased working hours; but total man-power is still less than it was six months ago, and there is an average loss to the industry of nearly 300 workers a week. The new wage rates may do a little; but it would be foolish to expect that they can do all that is needed. The long-run solution, of course, is better utilisation of a reduced labour force by means of re-equipment and mechanisation. But that cannot be done quickly. And in the meantime even Canada has joined the queue of customers asking for British coal.

PARLIAMENT: Two Chancellors

Wednesday.

While the Budget has been discussed in the Chamber, its author has naturally been the main topic of conversation in the lobbies. Dalton has always been one of the most popular Ministers with Labour back-benchers, and reaction to the blow has tended to make him even more so. Nevertheless, for a moment, all were dismayed. The event, following so closely on other calamities, was too terrible for immediate absorption. There is still some feeling that he need not have resigned, but now the general disinclination is to leave it at that and to hope for his speedy return to Cabinet office. On the Select Committee proposed by Churchill feelings were mixed—some Government supporters suspecting a Tory design to make the most out of the situation; others welcoming the opportunity to have it proved to the world that it was "just as simple as that" and nothing more.

Speeches on the Budget itself have mostly been of a high standard. Stanley led off on Thursday with a characteristically witty speech in which he sounded the note for the Tory theme-song "Cut the food subsidies." His colleagues were not slow to sing the chorus, adding variations, diminuendo or crescendo, of their own. From the Government side the afternoon was remarkable for three successive, and successful, speeches. George Benson came first with a thoughtful and able review of the whole field, ending with the inevitable conclusion that the autumn Budget did not go half far enough, particularly in its failure to make more use of a planned purchase tax. Bruce followed with a flailing, flat-out attack on the Tories, throwing everything that came into his hands, relevant or irrelevant, in the way of quotations, leaflets, circular letters and a capital levy. This stimulated Barbara Castle to another onslaught, based on the proposition that surplus purchasing power was not the possession of the workers, whoever else might own it.

The chief counter to these three speeches was provided by Boothby who, as well as denouncing the food subsidies, claimed that our economic policy had now been reduced to a few pep talks on parlour games in the evening, about which most of his audience probably knew a great deal more than Sir Stafford Cripps. Light entertainment was then provided by W. J. Brown, who bemoaned the fact that, after hearing so many differing economic theories, he was called upon as a humble private M.P. to judge between them—at which point David Kirkwood pointed out to him that he had been under no obligation to stand up.

On Monday the great food subsidy battle began again, with Sir John Anderson trying to explain, amid constant interruptions, that his speech at the end of last session had been misunderstood. Although he wanted the subsidies cut, he did not want them dropped all at once, and he thought there ought to be compensatory adjustments. "Do you mean an increase in wages?" shouted the Socialists. Sir John was not going to commit himself on that. "What are the compensatory adjustments then?" No answer. Sir John is a better civil servant than he is a parliamentarian.

However, he had some support from Aidan Crawley who, to the irritation of his colleagues, wanted the working people to be made to understand how serious the situation was by paying more for their food. Thorneycroft, in an attractively phrased and delivered speech, suggested that the subsidies should be scaled down by £300 millions, involving a rise in the cost of food of 2s. 3d. a head a week. His compensatory adjustments were additional increases in the Old Age Pensions and Family Allowances—adjustments that could hardly please Sir John Anderson, who still thinks the Government have been too hasty with their social services. He, like other Tories, cooed gently on Sir Stafford with the flattering assumption that they knew he would not be averse to making unpopular decisions and relieving the Tories of responsibility for them. But Cripps disappointed them, and was as firm in his defence of the food subsidies as the former Chancellor had been. In his first speech as Chancellor he displayed all the well-known lucidity, if not yet quite all the detailed grasp of his subject. PHINEAS TERTIUS

WILL BRITAIN OPPOSE PARTITION?

The Americans and Russians have now agreed on the procedure to be employed for supervising the partition of Palestine, if the majority report of Unscop receives the necessary two-thirds majority in the Assembly. This is a notable achievement. It is proposed that the transitional period, after the British troops and police surrender responsibility for law and order, shall last for two months. During this period a Uno Commission, responsible to the Security Council, will take the place of the High Commissioner and apparently exercise sovereignty on behalf of the United Nations. Since this Commission will have no forces at its disposal, the policing of the Jewish and Arab areas will be left to the two peoples themselves. This is a grave weakness in the plan. But it was rendered inevitable by the British decision to take no active part in enforcing a solution.

There will no doubt be disturbances; but whether there is civil war or not will depend in the last resort on the advice which Britain tenders to the Arab State. Will King Abdullah's Arab Legion, now serving under the British G.O.C. in Palestine, protect the frontiers of the new Arab State? And will the King himself be permitted ultimately to incorporate that State into Trans-Jordan, in partial fulfilment of his ambitions for a Greater Syria? Not if it is British policy to hold the Arab League together and to retain the friendship of King Ibn Saud, the dynastic enemy of King Abdullah. Will the Mufti be permitted to appoint himself Prime Minister of Arab Palestine, and to whip up a racial war against the Jews? Not if Mr. Bevin values King Abdullah's loyalty. The American-Russian agreement that Palestine should be ruled by a Uno Commission during the transition period settles nothing, except that neither of these Powers will seek to sabotage partition. Everything else depends on the British policy before and after we surrender responsibility for the Mandate.

What will that policy be? At Lake Success Mr. Creech Jones has studiously abstained from any suggestion of a positive attitude to the Unscop Report. He has simply repeated with increasing emphasis on three occasions the Government's determination to evacuate under any circumstances and to take no part in an imposed solution. Though the effect in Palestine and the Middle East on British prestige has been catastrophic, he has certainly brought a sense of reality into the proceedings at Lake Success. He may indeed be right in his assumption that any British support for partition would have prejudiced others against it. That this should be the case is a measure of the distrust which Mr. Bevin's policy has created not only among the Jews and the Arabs but even more among the representatives of nations with no direct interest in the dispute. At Lake Success on the Palestine issue we have not had a single friend. Even the Dominions have found themselves constrained to support partition actively. In these circumstances Mr. Creech Jones's negative line was probably the only one which he could adopt.

Why has the prolonged debate brought increasing agreement on partition instead of the dissensions aroused by every other subject in this Assembly? Chiefly because of the recognition that the British withdrawal in the Middle East will leave a political vacuum which neither the Americans nor the Russians are eager to fill. It suffices each to exclude the other. In searching for a pattern of mutual exclusion they have reached agreement that Palestine must be independent. In searching for a pattern of Arab and Jewish independence, they have been forced back on partition, as all realistic investigators have been since the days of the Peel Report.

No disinterested support has been forthcoming for the Foreign Secretary's thesis that Palestine is in the same category as any other Arab country, and that Jewish claims for Statehood represent an invasion. Ideologically Mr. Bevin would have found himself isolated at Lake Success. The Assembly has recognised that the issue is whether Palestinian Jewry is to be given a chance to survive, or whether it is to be subjected by force to Arab rule.

But apart from all considerations of international duty towards the Jewish people, there were more practical issues at stake. The Arabs never explain how, when the British blockade ceased, they proposed to exclude Jewish immigrants and to deprive those who had settled in Palestine of an independent national existence. The Assembly was on the side of realism. It recognised that there are two nations in Palestine and that independence must therefore be a dual and not a unitary process.

So, as the debate progressed, the support for partition has steadily increased. Grouped round the Soviet Union and the U.S.A. were the countries of Eastern Europe, of Latin America, the British Dominions and the Scandinavians. The working groups, established to elaborate the details of partition, are not finding it difficult to reach agreement on frontiers, and the question of implementation, the key to the whole problem, has been solved, so far as a solution is possible at Lake Success, by the American-Russian agreement.

For the second or the third time, therefore, success in giving peace to Palestine depends upon Britain. There were days when the Labour Party believed that a Labour Government could solve the problem unaided. To-day no more is asked of it than that it should not actively sabotage an agreed solution of the United Nations by playing politics with the Arab League. If partition is not accomplished by international action and under international guarantee, it will come as the result of a Jewish-Arab war. There seems no adequate reason why a Labour Government should prefer the latter.

GERMANY: The Test of World Co-operation

In an atmosphere resounding with the clash of Russian-American discord, the Foreign Ministers meet again, this time in a final effort to achieve a common policy of co-operation in the settlement of world problems. For the achievement of a common policy on Germany and Austria would mean the beginnings of a new and welcome collaboration between the Great Powers that would spell hope at last for a tired world; failure to achieve such co-operation will, on the other hand, render inevitable a bitter and dangerous intensification of an already explosive situation.

The real question that hangs over this Conference, therefore, is not whether the particular problems of Austria and Germany are incapable of solution in themselves but whether it is the purpose and intention of the Great Powers to co-operate at all in the post-war world.

On their own merits the immediate issues are clearly capable of compromise agreements. First, Austria, recognised by all four Powers as long ago as 1943 as "the first victim of German aggression," should have been settled long since. But two years have gone and Austria remains occupied, divided, and politically and economically hamstrung. Despite the agreement that no reparations should be claimed from this "liberated" country, her oil industry and other key export assets on which must depend her very existence have been seized by the Russians as "German assets." In these circumstances the continued occupation of Austria becomes a farce and a betrayal, and Austria yet another victim of the inexorable Russian veto. Yet ostensibly the sole issue to be resolved is a relatively simple definition of "German assets."

The German questions coming before the Conference are more numerous and complicated, but here again they represent, in the main, not disagreements on principles but failure or refusal to implement principles already agreed.

For the failure to establish central German administrations all four Allies must accept part of the responsibility—the Russians because of their failure in the first place to implement the Potsdam clauses on economic unity; the Americans for their attempts to force extreme federalism on a country whose whole urge is towards unity and whose whole economy has been evolved as a highly centralised inter-dependent mechanism; France for her unreasoning demands for even more drastic partitioning of Germany into separate States, and Great Britain for her vacillation between federalism and the centralised economic direction which is implicit in her Socialist conceptions.

But Russia has now taken the initiative in her strident championship of German political unity on a Weimar basis. Let there be no hesitation on the part of our Foreign Secretary in lining up this time with Russia, since surely he must recognise that all the experience and trends of modern social and economic development point to the need for extending and not contracting areas of economic activity. Have not the American Foreign Relations Committee themselves now loudly demanded, as a condition of aid to Europe, a closer integration of European economy? It should not really be difficult to persuade America that, if integration of European economy is an essential pre-requisite to her recovery, the disintegration of German economy—which is part of Europe's—is a senseless contradiction, and that economic integration without central political direction is futile. Similarly, central economic administrations necessarily presuppose a central government to give the necessary political direction and co-ordination as well as authority to these administrations.

Nor can a Peace Treaty be effectively negotiated without a central German Government. The suggestion that Britain and America would be prepared to negotiate such a Treaty with some interim "authority" seems pointless, for what authority, short of a Government bearing full responsibility, would ever be recognised by German history as binding the country to any such Treaty? Surely, if elected "central authorities" are possible, a central Government is equally possible!

That a central Government, in turn, invokes other considerations which are distasteful must be confronted. There is the question of a State Police Force or Militia. For Germany has no Army, and is, rightly, to be prevented from having an Army for many years to come. And no Government could retain the confidence of its constituents if it were forced to rely on foreign occupation troops to maintain order or to ensure the observance of its laws. Fears of a restoration of a "Police State" may be understandable, but make nonsense of our declared purpose of building a democratic Germany; nor can they be allowed to obscure the logic of the necessity for the formation of some German force that will give the required authority to the "central administrations" which were recognised as long ago as Potsdam to be necessary. Surely the development of a police force, inevitable as it is, had better come while Allied control and guidance along the right lines can still be applied if necessary.

The free operation of political parties is, of course, essential if free elections are to be held. The difficulties over the suppression of the S.P.D. in the Russian Zone and the banning of the S.E.D. in the Western Zones should not be impossible to adjust by agreeing that all existing parties shall be allowed to operate freely throughout all Zones, and that elections shall be under quadripartite supervision in all areas.

Here, then, on the question of a central Government, is opportunity for agreement with Russia. Let us seize it, for further procrastination can only discredit us.

Providing always that Russia is, in fact, seeking agreement at all on the main issues, the general economic principles to be embodied in a Peace Treaty should not prove difficult of at least clear definition. Economic unity is already accepted in principle and has only been rendered impossible of application because of (1) Russia's determination to secure—in defiance of her undertakings—the maximum amount of reparations from current production from her own Zone, and (2) the British refusal of quadripartite control of the Ruhr except as part of a general sharing of control in other areas. The latter is not an insuperable difficulty; the real problem resolves itself around the question of reparations.

Since reparations from current production would clearly involve a further hampering of German recovery, little if any material benefit can, in the end, accrue to the recipients of these reparations, for not only is German economy inseparable, but, in the long run, so is the economy of all Europe. Reparations of any kind, apart from the most limited and quickly transferable surplus machinery and equipment, are no less a fallacy to-day than when Norman Angell wrote his *Great Illusion*. Indeed, it is the constant squabbles over both the principles and the distribution of reparations that have been the main occasion, even if not the root cause, of the divisions and disagreements that have held up so tragically a general solution of both the German and the Austrian problems. One would surely have thought that the experience of Versailles and its preposterous reparation demands (which not only had to be abandoned but had finally to be replaced by heavy loans from the victors to the vanquished) and its equally disastrous example of "reparations in kind," would have prevented similar blunders to-day. But are we not in fact simply repeating these old errors? Is it not but a few months ago that Russia and America solemnly declared that any German steel capacity over 5½ million tons would be the beginning of German rearmament? Yet both Russia and America now cheerfully agree that a purely peacetime economy demands 11½ to 12 million tons! Is the conception of a peacetime "level of industry" any more real or immutable than the original calculation of steel requirements? Is it not elementary absurdity to suggest that any country—let alone Germany in her present state of destruction—can be guaranteed, by a pure exercise in mathematics, to reach a balance of payments at any particular figure, a specified level of employment, and a stable internal economy, within a stated period of years? Are German trade prospects any less subject to the fluctuations and disasters of world prices, market availabilities, competition, droughts, floods and harvests, or the effects of internal inflation than any other country's—our own for example? Such reflections surely emphasise the lack of realism behind the whole approach to these questions of "level of industry" and reparations and to the need for Britain to give a clear lead in securing their revision.

And yet reparations and the future level of German economy are, unhappily, the problems which, at least ostensibly, are holding up both the Peace Settlement and the restoration of European economy. Must we not then be prepared, however reluctantly, to sacrifice much in both directions for the purpose of breaking a deadlock that threatens to prove even more tragic in its consequences than a stumbling progress along the rocky and perilous road of painful experience? However that may be, let us hope that our own Foreign Minister will seek by every means at his command to persuade his Allies along the road of reason and economic realism by urging upon them—

(1) A review, in consultation with the German authorities to be established, of the present scheme of reparations and of the forbidden and restricted industries from the point of view of the needs of both Germany and her neighbours;

(2) A recognition that not only the achievement of a balanced economy that can contribute to the general rehabilitation of Europe but the very survival of Germany as an economic asset demands the abandonment of the present attempts to restrict her development, the freeing of every ounce of material and plant still left to her, and the transfer of every available workman from destructive to constructive activities;

and, above all—

to recognise that the overriding purpose of the Occupation and of the Potsdam Agreement was the destruction of Nazism and Militarism, and the reconstruction of German political life on a democratic basis which would enable her peaceful co-operation in international life.

For if it is important and urgent that Europe's war-devastated economy should be speedily restored, it is no less important and urgent that Europe should be freed from the fear of revival of German Nazism and agressive nationalism. Yet present conditions, resulting as they do in great part from the failure of the Occupying Powers to agree, are undoubtedly undoing all that has been done towards building the *framework* of democracy in Germany, destroying the *will* to co-operate, and creating amongst our defeated and disillusioned enemies a loathing born of bitter experience of such manifestations of democracy as have been vouchsafed to them. Therein lies the real "German menace," and to avert this menace is the gravest responsibility that faces the Conference of Foreign Ministers. For, as Lord Pakenham himself has stated:

> What matters far more than anything else in doing this job in Germany—the real standard by which history will judge us—is what effect we have had or have not had, at the end of it, on the mind of the German people.

This Conference is, then, not only the test of the sincerity of our proclamations concerning a democratic Germany but the test of what the future of the world is to be. If division must come we must face it, and pursue our policy in such spheres as may be left to our influence, but let us strive, with all we have, to avert the necessity for that dismal conclusion to all our brave hopes of unity in a world at peace.

JOHN HYND

(Until recently Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster and Minister in charge of Germany.)

A LONDON DIARY

THE first reaction to the Dalton episode was incredulity. How could a Chancellor of the Exchequer—not to mention a trusted lobby correspondent and a newspaper editor—suddenly and publicly and for no conceivable profit to himself, political or financial, break the most sacred of rules and smash up his very successful career? So odd was it that people began at once to construct explanations as bizarre as the event itself. "Did he do it on purpose?" I was asked, as if of a child who picks up a precious bit of crockery and throws it on the floor. I even heard the fantastic suggestion that Dalton "wanted to go," and had used this masochistic method of breaking with his colleagues! Then came the thought that his indiscretion, though shocking, was obviously innocent and that he was very harshly treated. Perhaps Attlee jumped at the chance of ending a Cripps-Dalton disagreement in the Cabinet! So Dalton went out, as someone said, "in a blaze of sympathy." Unquestionably he has the personal sympathy of every unprejudiced observer. But there is another side to the story that seems to me to justify Attlee and also to support the demand for an official inquiry. The understanding between Ministers and confidential pressmen—an essential feature of our system—is badly damaged, and everything possible must be done to stop the foolish or malicious tongues that whisper that there must be "something behind it." The Garry Allighan affair has done great harm in confirming in the minds of thoughtless people the smear stories about politicians that are put about by people who are not thoughtless. I have no doubt that it was because the Government had at all costs to dispel

any suspicion of shady personal behaviour that Mr. Attlee acted so promptly. He has at least the satisfaction of hearing an American radio commentator say that "if Congress maintained as high a standard as the House of Commons, it would not get a quorum."

* * *

This unhappy incident, on the top of other disasters, has put Labour stocks down for the moment, and though production figures in steel and coal—the key to almost everything—are very encouraging, we cannot expect general improvement in the country during the next few months. It is a time to be steady and to look ahead, to plan for recovery and be ready to seize the favouring moment. In the near future I hear that further food cuts are inevitable. There is one alleviation of the shortages which the Government might, I think, allow without risk to the future. I learn that there are two years' stocks of sugar in this country. Presumably we are holding it in reserve, but the time for using some of this reserve would seem to be arriving. Instead of reducing the sugar ration to the trade and to the individual, I should have thought the Government should have given us more sugar in various forms to make up, to some extent, for the shortage of potatoes, which are carbo-hydrates in another form.

* * *

I was not surprised that Sir Oswald Mosley should have chosen this moment to re-appear on the public stage. The time is propitious for him. He can look for support among the disappointed and disgruntled, from many whose capacity to understand is limited by their immediate circumstances. He can show that life under a Tory Government would be far worse than it is under Labour; he can make great play with the ideological conflict on the Continent, the decline of British power in comparison with America and Russia, and he may even persuade some who did not understand the war to believe that his attitude to it was right. Unreason is increasing in the world and Fascism profits from anger and frustration. It would be silly to deny that a Mosley movement may be a dangerous element and that violent and unconstitutional forces may be let loose by the recrudescence of a Fascist movement. There are wise and foolish ways of opposing Mosley, and hurling bricks through the windows of the Farringdon Street Memorial Hall on Sunday was not a move calculated to weaken British Fascism. One question that thoughtful and responsible people must now consider is whether our existing laws are strong enough, even if vigilantly enforced, to curtail the more obviously anti-social aspects of Fascist campaign methods. Insulting words and behaviour can be punished with three months' imprisonment, and meetings from which the police reasonably apprehend a breach of the peace can be closed down. But since the Caunt case decision in Liverpool the other day, it looks as if it may be legally possible to write, as opposed to saying, almost anything about the Jews. Here is a matter which His Majesty's Law Officers must at once consider; it may be advisable to revise the law so that action can be successfully taken against those who write words likely to stir up racial hatred.

* * *

The third International Socialist Conference since the war begins in Antwerp at the end of this month. The question is being asked whether in view of the emergence of the Cominform, post-war Social Democrats will again establish a Second International. So far they have resolutely refused to do anything of the sort. Indeed, the Cominform insistence that they are only an information body was, formally at least, merely following the Socialists' lead. My own guess is that the Socialists will again refuse to exacerbate the international split in the working-class movement by doing anything more than organise closer union between Socialist parties. Once they form any kind of Socialist International, they completely cut themselves off from the Social Democrats in Eastern Europe. Those who have been invited include, apart from the British, Dominion, American, Scandinavian and Western European Socialists, the Nenni Party in Italy, the Polish, Czech, Finnish, Hungarian and Rumanian Socialists, all of whom are attempting a working alliance with the Communists. The position of Rumania is not clear because the Rumanian Social Democrats have now voted in favour of fusing with the Communists, and no decision has yet been made about Bulgaria, on which a report is being made to the Conference. I note that the Indian Socialists, no doubt with the approval of Mr. Nehru, are being invited, and that the India Radical Democratic Party of Mr. Roy is also being asked. This is a hangover from a curious situation which means that the Socialists who were the most violently anti-British party during the war, are now recognised as the official representatives of Social Democracy in India, while an invitation has again gone out to Mr. Roy's now quite unimportant party which used to be regarded as a "stooge" of Britain. The other outstanding problem is whether the German Social Democrats are to come to the Conference. A committee was set up at the last Conference to consider the question of inviting Germans, and I should expect its report to be one of the first matters for discussion at Antwerp.

* * *

The first article in the current issue of the *Political Quarterly* is a most stimulating and informative discussion on "Incentives and Government Policy," by Professor Sargent Florence. It makes most popular talk on the subject look simply silly. It reminded me of Herbert Morrison's much-criticised remark to the effect that most of the talk about "incentives" was so much bunkum. If he meant that the problem is not to be simplified, after the manner of the *Economist*, into a choice or a combination of the "stick and the carrot," Mr. Morrison was quite right. Workers do not necessarily work better because they fear the sack, nor do capitalists only show enterprise and initiative when they have before them the lure of high profits. As an amusing exercise in social thinking, I recommend the game of writing down a list of people of one's own acquaintance in trade or business, in nationalised industry, in politics, in factories or mines, in various forms of literary or artistic production, and then try to work out the motives that in each case led to slackness or harder work. You will find that the motives are numerous and the problem immensely complex.

* * *

The obituary notices of Sir Alexander Paterson—he was universally known as Alec Paterson and only received his title at the end of his life—have all talked of his book, *Across the Bridges*, and his work for penal reform. But they have not emphasised what I regard as his most remarkable achievements. He was a religious man, with much influence over young men; it was due to his personality that many who would otherwise have gone into Holy Orders or sought more conventional types of "good works," became masters at Borstals. Again Alec Paterson did not confine his interest in prison reform to this country; he visited prisons and worked hard for improvements in many Continental countries. The most fruitful of his adventures was probably his journey to Devil's Island at a time when the conditions there were little appreciated, even by French officials. I understand that Devil's Island is being abandoned as a penal settlement, and that much of the credit belongs to Paterson.

* * *

I am greatly intrigued with the case of Hans Van Meegeren, who has been sent to prison for a year because his imitations of Vermeer were so good that none of the critics knew they were not originals. Indeed, his secret was only discovered because, when he was accused of having sold State art treasures to Hermann Göring, he rebutted the accusation by proving that they were all his own work. Now it may be said that his offence was to make money by false pretences. That, I submit, cannot be sustained because if his pictures were indistinguishable from Vermeers, then they were worth as much as Vermeers. He had to pretend they were Vermeers because otherwise their merit would not have been recognised. Indeed, he was surely underpaid; for, as a painter able to paint pictures of as much beauty as Vermeer, he was entitled to more remuneration than a mere connoisseur who happened to have a real Vermeer to dispose of. Hans Van Meegeren, in my view, ought not to be in gaol at all, but kept at public expense painting as well as he can. The only alternative conclusion would seem to be the surely untenable one that the value of a masterpiece lies in its rarity and not in its beauty.

* * *

How I envy those Fleet Street experts on an occasion like the Royal Wedding! How skilfully they make a column out of a silk frock and a headline out of a smile! They can be lyrical about the wedding gifts, the dazzling gold and silver, the diamonds, the pictures of the stag at bay and the good books bound in full morocco. They could perhaps have made more than they did of the old-world glamour of Charing Cross village on Wednesday night; it was something like a celebration to see crowds collecting at midnight, hawkers selling paper hats and all the fun of the fair, and gay parties interrupting all-night revels to drink coffee at street-corner stalls. I know that I ought to make tactful references to the first great Elizabeth of England, to recall memories of the wedding of Victoria and Albert and to comment on the constitutional importance of the occasion. But as Elizabeth and Philip are young and in love, I shall content myself with wishing them, and all other true lovers, every success and happiness in their marriage.

CRITIC

THIS ENGLAND

A 5/- prize for the first entry in this column goes to K. E. Henrichsen.]

Paste entries on postcard or slip of paper and give details of origin. Address to THIS ENGLAND, 10 Great Turnstile, W.C.1.

Although the fact that he was a wartime soldier gave a man the opportunity of drinking too much raw gin, his death could not be attributed to war service, a judge decided yesterday.—Report in *Daily Mirror*.

Councillor Dr. Clayton said that with every respect to the Bishop of Birmingham he would class the book with "Forever Amber" and thought that no one would want to read it.—*Sunday Pictorial*.

Three years ago someone left a steam-roller on the side of a hill near Tring, Herts. The council have tried in vain to find out who owns it; now they are going to sell it.—*Evening Standard*.

Sir—As a biologist I am a believer in our House of Lords. For the founder of a noble family is normally a man of outstanding natural ability, and natural ability is a thing that is transmissible by heredity. The hereditary peerage, then, represents broadly a strain of natural ability.—Letter, *Daily Telegraph*.

The Minister of Defence says that efforts are being made to prevent such things as a three-ton lorry being used to convey a latch-key.—*Bath and Wilts Chronicle and Herald*.

Cyril James writes: The general reaction of readers to my article, "How Can We Beat the Sex Criminal?" is that punishments for sex offences are not heavy enough. Suggestions include: the death penalty, flogging, castration, ducking, a revival of the stocks, and the compulsory placing of sex criminals on a vegetarian diet.—Letter, *John Bull*.

THE GREAT DEBATE

II.—The European Nucleus

RECENT developments in both Eastern and Western Europe show clearly enough the deadly effects of the action and reaction of the Communist and anti-Communist crusades. In every country politics are being polarised into a pro-American Right and a pro-Russian Left. The democratic parties of the Centre, both Socialist and Catholic, which are Britain's natural allies, are being steadily squeezed out, and simultaneously the hopes of any rational solution of the German problem grow more remote.

The economic consequences are equally harmful. Trade expansion between Eastern and Western Europe and generally between the Communist and the non-Communist world is being hamstrung by ideological and strategic considerations. Though all Europe desperately needs coal, America refuses to sell coal-cutting machinery to Poland since this would build up Communist resources. On the other side, the Kremlin is not likely to be encouraged to trade with Britain by the knowledge that all British atomic research is open to exclusive American inspection. The flow of trade across the Iron Curtain is now restricted by "security considerations," much as it was between Germany and Russia under the Stalin-Hitler Pact.

Politically, the chief sufferer from this attrition of democracy is France. The Fourth Republic has very nearly fallen to the condition of the Spanish Republic before the war of intervention. Democracy is at the mercy of two extra-Parliamentary forces each looking for support to a foreign Power. In Britain, while there is no direct threat to our democracy, our economic future is threatened by the ideological war. The failure to reach agreement about Germany has already meant that half the dollars earned by our export trade have had to be expended on the British Zone, while the interruption of trade negotiations with Russia last July has cost us an invaluable bargaining weapon with America. If we are to avoid a creeping paralysis of our industrial life, we cannot rely for many months on dumping the products of the export drive in markets steadily dwindling owing to the dollar famine. That would be as futile as reliance on American aid. What we need is first and foremost a common export-import area with our Western European neighbours and their overseas Empires, and second, stable trade relations with both the New World and the Eastern Bloc. What we cannot afford to accept is a two-bloc world and a divided Europe. That is why we must have an independent British policy.

In the Fabian pamphlet I discussed last week Mr. Woolf suggests the lines which such a policy could follow. His arguments against an American entente are, I believe, unanswerable. The issue is not whether we *should* surrender our status as a World Power capable of winning a world war. History has already taken that decision for us; and the task of a Labour Government is to accept our new position as an integral part of Europe and to work out a policy commensurate with it. In particular, says Mr. Woolf, we should stop thinking about victory in a war and concentrate on seeking to prevent it.

This distinction is more important than appears at first sight. For hundreds of years we were so strong and so blessed by geography that we could manipulate the balance of power from outside Europe; and we have come to assume that the best way to prevent a war is to make as sure as we can that our side will win. But this is not universally true. Measures taken to win a war may provoke it. If so, they will not be in the interest of those nations for which the prevention of war is even more important than a problematic increase in the chances of victory. No British Foreign Secretary today can condemn out of hand a settlement simply because it fails to meet all the security requirements of the Chiefs of Staff in Washington. Indeed, no genuine peace settlement could possibly satisfy them. That is why he must hold himself free from any exclusive military association with America which limits his negotiating powers.

Mr. Woolf, however, goes further. He argues that Socialist Britain cannot and should not prepare to resist aggression by a major Power and should only retain armed forces sufficient to defeat a second-class State. This proposal would reduce us below the status of Switzerland, whose armed neutrality has successfully deterred major Powers from attacking her. Disarmed neutrality would give us not independence but isolation.

The danger of mistaking isolation for independence is indeed very great. The collapse of the Churchill-Bevin policy has left us on thoroughly bad terms with the Eastern Bloc. To balance this, we have no definite guarantee of assistance from America, and no common policy with our European neighbours. A policy built on fear of the Russians, dislike of the Americans, and superiority to the Europeans is the very opposite of independent: it is insular and impotent.

The ultimate objective of a truly independent policy must be the creation of a nucleus of the United States of Europe. In setting about this task we must assume that Eastern Europe will be politically dominated by Russia for at least as long as Russia fears an inevitable clash with the West. Russian obstruction can only be removed by a British policy which recognises both the Russian and the American spheres of influence, systematically attacks the causes of mutual distrust, and so creates the conditions for an overall settlement.

A sharp distinction must be made in our attitude to the two World Powers. In the short run, we should assume that nothing we say and little we do can change the monolith of suspicion on which Russian policy is based. The Kremlin is not open to persuasion, but the Americans might be brought to see the case for European independence. The Russians will only tolerate it grudgingly if it does not weaken their Western security belt; to them it might appear a lesser evil. But the Americans could be persuaded to accept it for its justice as well as its expediency.

The initiative, therefore, can only be taken by Britain and in Western Europe. Our first job must be to ensure that American aid is not given according to the Truman Doctrine, but along the lines laid down in Mr. Marshall's far-sighted Harvard Speech. We should persuade the Americans that, in their own interest, they should not follow the Russian example in Eastern Europe and turn Western Europe into an American security belt, but should exclude it from their defence system. Indeed, a policy of this kind, if initiated by Britain, would be welcomed by the vast majority of Americans. They have no wish to run Europe, and they would not be sorry to see a knot of European nations opt out of the ideological war, pool their security and economic planning, and build up their trade relations without any regard for ideology. The assurance that Western Europe was going to fend for itself between the blocs would not embarrass but assist a genuine Marshall plan.

What we need today is a British initiative, taken in the closest consultation with the Commonwealth, to save even a fragment of Europe before it is too late. It is no use saying that we cannot act without France. France cannot now be saved —and nor can Italy—without a British decision to become the first member state of the United States of Europe; and to accept the revolutionary changes in her island position which this implies. Maybe at first only a few small Powers would join us. We should not be deterred. We should form a nucleus now, however small, of nations which recognise that European independence is a pre-condition of survival for Europe—and for civilisation.

What should be the terms of the British proposals? Immediate and complete federation is out of the question, and at the other end of the scale, conversations about customs and tariffs are equally futile. It is the political issues which divide us, and we shall be well advised in the first instance to concentrate on foreign, defence, and colonial policy. Here, for instance, is a list of subjects on which it should not be impossible to reach constructive agreement with some of our Western European neighbours.

(1) Pooling of atomic research.

(2) The development of a regional security system under Uno, and an agreement to refuse all military commitments to Great Powers outside the group.

(3) Joint planning of colonial development.

(4) Joint planning of domestic heavy industries.

(5) An Agreement to set up joint machinery for the allocation, between members of the group, of assistance received under the Marshall Plan.

If even three or four nations go ahead with unification along these lines, the effect in the rest of Europe and in Russia and America will be enormous. The mere fact that Britain has accepted her European destiny unreservedly may check the deadly process of internal polarisation which is leading in Eastern Europe to complete totalitarianism and in Western Europe to political disintegration. It would give fresh hope to democratic forces which are now despairing of the struggle. Most important of all, we should save ourselves from the barren choice between helpless isolation and subordination to a non-European Power. For British independence is not only impossible *without* European independence: it is impossible *outside* it.

R. H. S. CROSSMAN

SOMETHING MUST BE DONE IN GREECE

(From a Special Correspondent.)

MANY of us who served in various capacities in Greece during and since the war were happy to see the publicity recently given by the *Daily Mirror* to the atrocities which have been an almost weekly occurrence in that unhappy country since its liberation from the Germans. The *Mirror* was neither exaggerated nor untypical, and was certainly not excused by the Greek Minister for Public Order, Mr. Rentis, when he explained that it was customary for heads with a price on them to be produced when the reward is claimed. In fact, this barbarous habit of producing severed and bloody heads was reintroduced by the post-Civil War Right-wing Government of Admiral Voulgaris, which was willed into and remained in power only by the British Government's desire. Even the collaborationist governments of the occupation and the Germans themselves did not use such barbarities against the partisans. The method is a relic of days when a bandit was neither a political fighter nor a refugee from a police terror, but simply a robber who could be apprehended in the trackless mountain fastnesses only by unorthodox methods.

The present writer has seen several cases in the last two years where there was no question of reward and the severed head was put up for exhibition on a pole in the main square of the town simply *pour encourager les autres—les autres*, of course, being Liberal-minded citizens who disagreed with the Government. For example, the head of the Communist Partisan leader, Ares Velouchiotis, whose band terrorised the Germans during the war, was exhibited for a week in the town of Trikkala in the autumn of 1945. This was *before* the anti-Government inhabitants of Greece began their military opposition to the increasingly terroristic Greek Governments.

The Varkiza agreement, which ended the Civil War, guaranteed amnesty for those who had taken part in the uprising in 1944, excepting only those who had committed crimes against civil law not justified by the revolutionary state of the country, and specifically said that reprisals would not be taken against revolutionaries, partisans or their families.

Within a week of the signing of the agreement I saw the most flagrant and atrocious violations carried out by the newly formed National Guard—mainly composed of ex-collaborators. All those who had believed in the words of the agreement (guaranteed by the British) and had not fled were imprisoned and abominably beaten and assaulted. In one so-called prison—about the size of a kitchen in a small flat—I saw sixteen men, women and children. Two of the men were lying unconscious in their own blood after beating on the head and back; each person was allowed to visit the lavatory only once every three hours for three minutes; there was one small window in the room which the guards would not permit to be opened; one man of 65, arrested for selling E.A.M. newspapers, was weeping softly as he lay against the wall—he had been tied up and beaten for an hour on the soles of his feet. None of these people had been informed of the reason for their arrest; none was ever tried; most of them remained in prison for nine months.

This was not an isolated incident at this period when there were *no* Communist bands, and *no* Left Wing activity, even of the kind permitted to any political party. When the Left at length realised that the authorities were not making even a pretence at carrying out the terms of Varkiza, they began meetings of protest, telegrams to friendly Powers, newspaper agitations. When these legal methods were brutally stifled, military reprisals inevitably began and led to the disastrous Civil War now taking place.

It is said that the National Guard had natural feelings of revenge since the Left Wing had executed many of their relatives; but their motives were more complex than that. In many cases the relatives had been collaborators, and their relatives, now in uniform and supported by the British, saw an opportunity of working their passages. It is said, also, that Varkiza was unjust and allowed many criminals and murderers to get off scot-free. That is no doubt true, but such criminals—and every revolutionary movement has a fringe of them—would certainly have been well content to remain peacefully in their homes had they been allowed to.

It is perhaps not generally known that the British Army, which had put down the excesses and finally the revolution of the Left, received strict instructions when Varkiza was signed that they were not to interfere in Greek affairs. This gave the Government forces *carte blanche* to wreak their vengeance, while British troops stood by and pretended not to notice anything.

The question of interference from the North is a separate matter. Russia's attitude during the Revolution and until mid-1945 was impeccably correct, and not even the most rabid anti-Communists in Greece have been able to produce a shred of evidence showing that the uprising of 1945 was sponsored or assisted in the slightest degree by Russia or Greece's northern neighbours. No one can defend the later actions of these Powers in stimulating and indirectly assisting the Left-wing bands; they simply took the opportunity of fishing in troubled waters—but the waters were troubled (by the Greek Government and the acquiescence of the British) long before the Russians and the Yugoslavs started fishing. The reasons for this fishing are complex, but a case can certainly be produced to show that it was a Russian reprisal for real or imaginary double-crossing by the Western Powers in the international sphere. And this is not discounted by the possibility of Russian imperialistic aims.

But what most concerns Englishmen who know Greece is the fact that this country was at one period our sole ally in the war, and wrote with her blood one of the most glorious pages in the history of the war against Nazism. Today she is the pawn in the American-Russian power game, and her richest agricultural areas are already the battlegrounds of a bloody, international war. Her best brains are wasted in exile, or embittered into anti-social activity; a majority of her people are on the edge of starvation; many of them are living in the most squalid and hopeless conditions, in constant fear of death, torture and imprisonment.

It is not enough to say, as the *Daily Mirror* says, that our troops should be withdrawn, and—by implication—that the Greeks should be left to fight it out among themselves. The British in particular have plain moral duties towards our old, courageous ally; for the sake of British promises and prestige, something more must be done to end the slaughter and destruction in Greece. The solution cannot be easy, but even if it means bargaining in the international sphere with Russia, or giving way and losing face at some other point to Russian claims, it should be attempted. For the Greeks have more claim on Britain's good will and strength than any other European nation. Surely Britain is morally compelled to take the initiative to end this disgrace to humanity.

HOW A CIVILISATION DECLINES

WHAT does one mean by saying of a civilisation that it declines? By what criteria is the decline assessed, by what stigmata recognised? The question was, I remember, first raised for me by an article by H. N. Brailsford which appeared in this journal about 1920.

Brailsford had been travelling through the devastated areas of Poland and had stayed with a Polish Count whom he had known before the war. There was very little food and the house was unheated, but the Count, worn and frail, sat in his well-stocked library and talked to Brailsford about Greek sculpture. As they were talking, a peasant entered and stood in the doorway, shaggy, ragged and uncouth, and carried on a brief conversation in monosyllables with the Count about the disposal of some acorns. Brailsford must have shown his surprise that a peasant should come into the library. "That," said the Count, "was my son."

I caught, as I thought, a similar, though less sensational glimpse of what it means to say that a civilisation declines on a recent visit to Oxford. Oxford is very crowded; it has seven thousand-odd undergraduates compared with three thousand in my time. After lecturing I went to Balliol for what I was told would be an informal talk with undergraduates. I found some forty men crowded into an ordinary sized room; they partook moderately of beer—there wasn't enough beer for second glasses—and some of them, considerably less than half, smoked. After the usual preliminary embarrassment, they began to fire questions at me. What did I think of Oxford women? Had the condition of the average undergraduate deteriorated since my time? What, in short, did I think of *them*? Intellectually, I thought that they were as intelligent a group of young men as one would wish to meet, not only more intelligent than a corresponding group of London students and much more intelligent than a group of middle-aged professional men, but more articulate. They put their points clearly and well; the meaning they conveyed was that which they wished to convey and not some other meaning, and their minds were unusually quick in the intellectual uptake. There is no reason, I think, to suppose that the standards of teaching have declined at Oxford, although the number of undergraduates is too large to permit that individual attention—the two men attending together to read their essays to a tutor—which my generation received.

Yet, as I looked round the crowded, dingy room, noted the untidy, shabby clothes, marked the paucity of beer and cigarettes, I could not help contrasting their lot with that of my own generation. When we were at Oxford our lives were cushioned with money and leisure; they had neither, and as a consequence the future was ever present with them. Ever present, too, was the State. We never thought about the State one way or the other, but upon them it pressed in countless ways, apart altogether from the fact that it was defraying out of generous grants the expenses of their university education. "If it was not for the grants," one of them said to me, "most of us wouldn't be here." How, in the circumstances, could they be care-free as we were? How could *they* be expected to put "jerries" on the spikes of the Martyr's memorial, to dress up as policemen and regulate the traffic, or drive a herd of donkeys down the Broad? They were a generation robbed of the larkiness of youth.

Nor were the high jinks of the young the only goods of which, as they went through life, they would be deprived. There are some experiences they will never savour, some sensibilities they will never be able to cultivate.

Pressed to give examples, I cited the case of wine. A taste in wine is an æsthetic taste, belonging to the same family as a taste in books, a taste for pictures, or a taste in music—albeit a poor relation of the family. It is, therefore, a civilised taste. It gives pleasure, but pleasure is not the only, perhaps not the most important, element of value in the complex experience which the mind enjoys, *via* the machinery of a cultivated palate, from the drinking of good burgundy or claret. In addition to the pleasure there is the perception of something rare and beautiful, entailing a heightening of sensibility and an enrichment of being. Nor should this occasion surprise. There is no reason—at least, I know of none—why the experience of beauty in physical things should be limited by those sensations which are conveyed to us through the sense organs of hearing and sight and the neural machinery by means of which their stimulation is conveyed to the brain. But that this total and complex effect of good wine may be experienced, the palate must first be cultivated. Taste in wine comes no more than taste in music or in art by chance or nature; it is a long, sometimes a laborious business to acquire it, and in the course of acquiring it we have to put up with distastes and disgusts entailed by the increasing rejection of what is bad. It also demands a clean palate, a knowledge of what to eat with and before one's wine, moderation in drinking, and certain prohibitions in the matter of smoking. Above all, it involves constant, continous and long habituation with wines of all kinds and particularly with those that are good.

These are some of the reasons why a taste in wine is rarely acquired before middle age.

"Now you," I said, "will in all probability never acquire this taste, for the shortage of good wines is now so great as to make them to all intents and purposes unprocurable. This war has introduced a break, the first in centuries, in the wine-drinking tradition. It is, of course, possible that, if European civilisation survives, good wines will again be available for drinking a dozen years hence, but during those dozen years you will not have had the chance to acquire the taste for them, since you will be deprived of the opportunity to cultivate a palate."

The following morning I breakfasted in Hall.

Undergraduates no longer take their meals in their rooms, but breakfast, lunch and dine in Hall. Tea, however, they still make in their rooms, and since they don't like leaving their rations in Hall for fear that somebody might pinch them, they can be seen crossing the Quad before and after every meal, laden with bits of butter, canisters of tea, packets of sugar, even with screws of salt and pepper. They seemed to be ashamed of this necessity under which they labour and made jokes when caught in the act. Lunch, I was told, was usually taken at a British Restaurant—of which there are six in Oxford. You queued up for a quarter or even half an hour, snatched your food, sat down with workmen, clerks, shopkeepers, and bus conductors at crowded little tables and in the midst of an appalling din consumed a fairly substantial meal for one and threepence.

After breakfast—a bit of haddock, margarine and doubtful marmalade—we walked round St. John's Gardens. Lovely as ever, these, so far as I could see, were untouched by the times. But the public, I was told, were not normally allowed

to wander freely in the gardens—at least, they had not been in the past. But now democracy is clamouring at the gates—quite literally at the gates of such places as St. John's Gardens. For who can believe that the use of these gardens will still be denied to the public fifty years hence, or that, if they are opened, they will retain their present serenity and gracious charm; or that, even if they were to remain closed, the College would have sufficient resources to enable it to maintain so much defiantly non-utilitarian beauty?

The gardens, in fact, like the way of life to which they ministered, are an anachronism. Their existence depends on privilege and their enjoyment on money and leisure. But we are moving into an age which is without privilege, has little money and less leisure. Thus, the gardens of the Oxford colleges, in common with all beautiful private gardens, belong to a rapidly diminishing category of goods. In fifty years' time such things will cease to be, and the sensations and emotions from which *Thoughts in a Garden* took their rise will also be numbered among man's lost experiences.

These losses, the loss of the taste for wine and of the pleasures of meditation in quiet and gracious gardens, I have treated as symptoms of a civilisation in decline and, from the point of view of *quality*, this undoubtedly is their meaning. But there is another; that of *quantity*. For what has happened at Oxford is not all loss. More people are enjoying the advantages, the amenities, the pleasures of Oxford than ever before, even if they enjoy them at a lower level. More people than ever before are being equipped by training of mind, refinement of spirit and elevation of taste not only to earn a living, but to acquire a life worth living. More are learning what great men have thought and said memorably about life, and their conception of what life may be is correspondingly widened and ennobled. Now it is, I suppose, axiomatic that, if you spread the butter wider, you spread it thinner; axiomatic at any rate in regard to material goods, since these occupy space and are limited. But it is not axiomatic in regard to the things of the mind and the spirit, though as a matter of historical fact their wider quantitative distribution has almost always been accompanied by a decline in the quality of what is distributed. Cultures, in fact, have historically been aristocratic. Is it in the nature of things that they should be so? I do not know, but I suspect that the answer depends upon the size of the population. Granted our present numbers, it may well be that the attempt to distribute culture, to widen taste and to make beauty available to all will be to cheapen taste and despoil beauty. But even if these results must, given our present numbers, necessarily be so, it does not necessarily follow that they are to be deplored. Whether it follows or not depends, I suppose, upon whether you think that social justice is the greatest of the goods.

C. E. M. JOAD

The Arts and Entertainment

THE SCHOOL OF PARIS

L'Ecole de Paris—A New Generation is the title of an exhibition at the St. George's Gallery which contrives in the minutest space to give a bird's-eye view of its subject. Twenty-five artists are represented and each of the Old Masters still living contributes his jot; but the floor is held by a generation whose average birthdate is 1905. Borés, who is rather older than this, and Pignon have for some time seemed to me the only figures of the slightest power in the new movement and Pignon is unfortunately hardly present at this exhibition: two water-colours give no idea of either the skill or the scope of his art. In spite of the power and subtlety of design; in spite of colour which makes a science, almost, of richness, Pignon is still eclectic in essence. Yet the very frankness of his allusions (to Picasso in the images and forms; to Matisse in the colour and the actual handling as well, perhaps, as in the even, all-over disposition of his design) is a virtue: this is the currency none of them can escape handling; Pignon manipulates it brilliantly. Borés is less of a virtuoso but he has a more personal flavour: his *Le panier de cérises*, 1934, (No. 29) is the best of the younger men's pictures in the show and *Le ruban bleu* (No. 28) is extremely interesting. He is really a Cubist Bonnard: less rich and exuberant but with an intimate, wistful approach to the cherries or flowers on his table. His is the gentlest cubism I have ever seen. In his canvases a spacious emptiness comes to life as one peers into it, and a check tablecloth suddenly crystallizes at the other side of some sweetly organised blue air. Other names one wishes to remember are Tailleux, Beaudin and Pierre Tal Coat. Gischia, Fougeron, Burtin and Robin are the really dead ones: in addition to a natural poverty Burtin and Robin make no attempt to hide technical crudeness in execution. But Tailleux and Tal Coat both have the spark of life in them though one is over-tentative and the other a trifle facile; and Beaudin is plugging away at a dry problem, with the aid of considerable intellectual equipment, in a manner that arouses a certain kind of admiration.

It may be thought that on the whole these artists are too derivative and suffer from a too-close proximity to Picasso and Matisse; that they have "too little to do with Nature," meaning external appearances. If this is so, some recent suggestions of mine to the effect that the "School of Paris" was still vital, if diminishing in brilliance, and that further exploration in terms Fauve and Cubist was desirable, and possible, may seem challenged. I would say, first, that there exist more impressive examples of the work of the better of these artists than we have yet seen in England; and secondly, that the emphasis was in any case on "exploration." It may be said these artists are going round in circles, vainly hoping to extend the French tradition on the basis of an erudition, a superlative "good taste" and a familiarity with the means of fine painting, all of which it would still be difficult to avoid inheriting in Paris. Art, some may add, is begetting art, without the intervention of the new blood that would come from Nature if she were again individually observed and felt. And this I don't altogether deny. But "observation of Nature" is in itself no panacea; and it must always be expressed in terms of one pictorial vocabulary or another: the most naturalistic art known is, it must be remembered, only a *convention* itself—usually of a distinctly inferior kind. What we are usually expressing when we say artists should return to Nature is a desire to see painting revivified in some way.

If none of these younger French painters is a very daring explorer in the artistic sense; if none is extending the expressive power of the formal vehicles—image and design—in such a way that new *kinds* of experience are brought within the category of "artistic experience"; at any rate their practice continues to be based upon the most important idioms yet available—those of the Fauves and the Cubists. At present I see no other pictorial language, for the communication of whatever subjects, than one involving Cubism plastically and Fauvism in connection with colour. Picasso is undoubtedly at this moment evolving yet another grammar and syntax: but he has not discarded Cubist and Fauve discoveries, which are deep buried in his new systems of an imagery bolder, sheerer and simpler than any before. *Guernica* was the major turning point of the last twenty years.

In an age in which scientific modes of knowledge are increasingly accorded an exclusive validity—a monopoly of Truth—these followers of Picasso are at one with him in the attempt to reveal unknown (and perhaps unknowable !) significances in the most commonplace: that is, in the everyday objects that litter the intériors of our houses. This is the Century of the Still Life: the human figure must come to terms with a coffee-pot if it wishes to enter these painters' pictures. If the scientists have become familiar with Life's component Atom, the greatest painter of our age reintroduces the most potent mystery to the most familiar setting—the kitchen table !

PATRICK HERON

A MUSICAL DIARY

Our future Queen being not only a Doctor of Music, but probably fonder of the art than any member of the royal house since Queen Victoria, it is unfortunate that none of our leading composers should have been asked to celebrate her wedding. A motet from the Abbey organist; three Fanfares from Sir Arnold Bax, one of them "composed fifteen years ago for the Musicians' Benevolent Fund"—that seems about all. Cheeseparing in the matter of clothes and food may have its point, but why ration genius? How differently, in the past, such things were managed. A Purcellian Ode celebrated every birthday of Queen Mary from 1689 to 1694; trivial Hanoverian junketings were magnificently commemorated by Handel. What a noble Epithalamion we might have had from Vaughan Williams or William Walton; what a sparkling Divertimento from Benjamin Britten. Creative artists, like the great public, adore festivity and jollification: Beethoven wrote dances for a Viennese coachmen's ball, and Mozart designed one of his most enchanting scores as party music for the wedding of a burgomaster's daughter. Well then !

Whenever I go to an orchestral rehearsal, I wish that more people could share the experience. One learns more, grasps more, enjoys more in those fresh morning hours than in a month's regular concert-going; and it becomes easier to see why there are always so few conductors of the front rank. The qualities required are apt to be mutually exclusive: intense, wide-ranging sensibility, coupled with the disciplinary powers of a sergeant-major. A closer analogy, perhaps, than the barrack square would be the class room: orchestral players are not unlike a good Sixth Form, and it is fascinating to observe the various means by which great conductors impose their authority. Weingartner and Sir Henry Wood used to succeed by downright meticulous efficiency; Toscanini arouses something like awe by the sheer intensity of his absorption in the music—not to mention the lurking possibility, should anything go wrong, of one of those fearful Italian rages, like a storm on Lake Garda; Beecham keeps everyone awake by the continual expectation of wit, and the apprehension of suddenly finding oneself its target. Bruno Walter's method is different: he is father, teacher, guide, philosopher, friend. He has an extraordinary talent for making hardened professionals feel reverence before the beauty of a hackneyed masterpiece; his behaviour at rehearsal is a living demonstration of the phrase which Beethoven wrote over his Mass: "Von Herzen—möge es wieder zu Herzen gehen". "From the heart it comes, to the heart may it go." All conductors spend half their time imploring their orchestras to *sing;* and when Dr. Walter cries ardently to his violins: "Sing out, my friends !" it would take a stony heart to refuse. The result is a lyrical warmth of tone and shapeliness of phrase rare in our concert life; no wonder the Albert Hall is packed to hear the London Philharmonic play Beethoven, Schubert and Brahms under his direction. And all honour to the L.P.O. for reviving Mahler's charming First Symphony: with its seven horns, an expensive gesture.

Dr. Walter's autobiography (*Theme and Variations:* Hamish Hamilton, 16s) has been criticised as self-centred. In a sense, it is, but the distinction between self and music is, in this case, hard to draw; we get the impression of a man entirely possessed by music, practical enough in his grasp of every musical detail, but only dimly aware of external forces and events. This was once the accepted idea of the artist, and in a sane world there is much to be said for it; those who are now compelled by the horrible trend of things to take sides and sign manifestos seem mostly—as artists—by so much the more distracted and incomplete. What delights us in Dr. Walter's book is the spectacle of a greatly talented man steadily advancing from one opera house to another in the golden age of German musical life; it is sadly evident that, for want of such a ladder, an equally gifted Englishman could hardly hope to achieve a commensurate result. Sir Thomas Beecham? The conditions that allowed *his* rise to the top belong equally, I think, to the past: he created his own ladder, and its rungs were made of gold from a large private fortune.

DESMOND SHAWE-TAYLOR

THE MOVIES

"An Ideal Husband," at the Carlton

So many films seem to have been made expressly for those who can just hear and just understand, that Wilde's accents come as music to the ear. We find ourselves at the Carlton listening attentively, delicately. (Last week the film was *Variety Girl.*) Lord Goring (Michael Wilding), trying on the button-hole that is beyond fashion, lets fly a trio of epigrams with the casual ease of a dart-player; two stick, one falls. Another round; then the valet, apologetically, has his fling—one dart very prettily aimed. This is only the warming up as his lordship makes ready to go out for the evening; the real games, with Society, marriage, fatherly pressure, blackmail, and political honour, will come afterwards. Mr. Wilding, the drone or butterfly in its heyday, wafts a disarming frivolity as he sets out, and it is only partly his fault if later he lapses into puzzled sententiousness. The camera more than once catches him coming back with the snap of elastic. His serious moments are the play's unfortunate ones. A theatrical plot, wooden emotions, ringing dialogue that is the reverse of witty—Wilde had not yet quite embraced a golden opportunism, and the producer who makes a film of *An Ideal Husband* must take it, melodrama and all. Sir Alexander Korda decided, perhaps rightly, on a lavish period piece.

He expands, in Technicolor, on Society with the capital S. For quite a long time before the play begins (it remains very much a play), we watch the to-and-fro at Hyde Park Corner: the sunlight, the parasols and toppers, the carriages, the Lifeguards, the little prancing ponies. And again at Lady Chiltern's, the crowded staircase, with introductions bawled out, holds us up and slowly dazzles. Such a babel! Such dresses by Beaton! Such over-the-balustrade music! Such chandeliers and tapestries! Despite exquisite moments, it is all, I am afraid, for me Technicolor with a capital T. The conversational bits of Wilde sit sparklingly enough, but the instant he changes to melodrama all sight and sound of this gathering vanish. You could hear a pin drop. You are on the stage.

In its sumptuous, rather unimaginative way *An Ideal Husband* goes, as *Caesar and Cleopatra*, for example, did not. And there is, intermittently, the delight of Lord Goring's better nature. The dandy had not yet degenerated into the ass. When he is not saving a friend's reputation or moralising about honour, he can be very diverting indeed; the scenes with his father (Sir Aubrey Smith, genially grumpy) provide as good banter as any in *The Importance of Being Earnest*. Miss Constance Collier warms to a tiny part. Miss Diana Wynyard and Mr. Hugh Williams seem, not surprisingly, chilled by theirs. Miss Paulette Goddard takes the eye with vivacity and a wonderful wardrobe. If I had the choice, I should much prefer to enjoy this play on the stage where it belongs; but an evening spent at the Carlton is not without its exhilarations.

WILLIAM WHITEBAIT

RADIO NOTES

CLEAR-VOICED and high-spirited (except for the two professional participants) the debate from the Cambridge Union was a complete delight. The satirical objurgation, the rhetorical question, the *suppressio veri*, and the *suggestio falsi*: all these powerful small-arms of debate were competently handled; the final speaker had even mastered the specialised oratorical devices of the Leader of the Opposition, thereby introducing into the evening its solitary note of priggishness. Everything was carried off with the greatest *savoir-faire;* and though undergraduates to-day are not always so young as they were, it remains a wonder that they can so soon acquire declamatory assurance; Mr. Silkin and Mr. Amery have probably never faced a more alert audience. The system of voting at the end was a little odd: we were told there were only two or three hundred people left in the hall, though the combined vote came to over seven hundred. The verdict was heavily in favour of the Conservatives; but—in case this should console anybody for anything—I have been told that this particular university has always been predominantly conservative in its opinions.

I have not listened to *all* the celebrations of the B.B.C.'s twenty-fifth birthday; few could. The glimpses of the past have been amusing, touching and refreshingly shameless. I suppose it was unintentional that when the voice of Sir Oliver Lodge was announced we should immediately hear Sir Max Beerbohm saying with gentle satire exactly what Sir Oliver might have said with gentle seriousness; but there was no doubt of the intentions of Messrs. Gilliam and Kavanagh in recalling the memorable occasion when the fleet was lit up. *Itma*, heartless as ever, by-passed the present occasion and proceeded to celebrate the Corporation's *fiftieth* anniversary, and though I shall not myself be spared to hear that when it does happen, I can't believe it will differ much from Mr. Kavanagh's forecast. *Itma*, though still at a loss for a basic theme comparable with Tomtopia, has settled down after an uneasy start; the last three shows have been of its very best. I sometimes feel that Mr. Kavanagh's restless comic genius leads him to tamper with characters whom we would be willing to let stay as they are for ever; I myself preferred Mona Lott's original departing sigh, and I cared more for Upsy than for his successors; but I suppose the president of these immortals must be allowed his sport with them. Handley is as lambent as ever, and I noticed that in Jubilee Music-Hall the laughter he evoked was different in *kind* from that of the others, the squealing lady at the back remaining mute throughout.

The Cenci was the most intense and compelling broadcast of a play I have heard on the air. Its verse was somewhat suppressed in delivery, yet as it happened pardonably so, for Shelley's youthful imitativeness was in this way disguised, and everything seemed fresh and new. It was a bold and illuminating production; Sir Lewis Casson's introduction and links were admirable, and it was pleasant to hear once more the unabashed sounds of closing doors and poured-out wine, especially now that so many radio-producers shy artily away from sound-effects which, in fact, rarely fail to charm the listener. The only fault of casting was that Bernardo was indubitably a girl. *The Winslow Boy* could have been much more of a success than it was, though transference to the air inevitably deprives us of Mr. Terrence Rattigan's delicate mastery of stage-technique, and reveals some over-hackneyed scenes (Young Man Asking Papa, for example) which got by safely on the stage. The play, which is about the oppressor's wrong and the law's delays, was implausibly cut, and one got no sense of the appalling length of time that passes before justice is done. The play was further unbalanced by the presence of some of the original cast, who, excellent on the stage, heavily over-acted on the air; but the performances of those well-known veterans, Miss Molly Rankin, Mr. Dennis Arundell and Master David Spenser were of the utmost accomplishment and subtlety.

HENRY REED

IN AFRICA

Parabolas of grief, the hills are never
Hills, and the plains,
Where through the torrid air the lions
shiver,
No longer plains.

Just as the lives of lions now are made
Shabby with rifles,
This great geography shrinks into sad
And personal trifles.

For those who are in love and are exiled
Can never discover
How to be happy: looking upon the wild
They see for ever

The cultivated acre of their pain;
The clouds like dreams,
Involved, improbable; the endless plain
Precisely as it seems.

ROY FULLER

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STALIN AND ALL THAT

SIR,—I am not quite sure I have grasped Mr. Maitland's point and I apologise if I have misunderstood him. But I think the gist of his argument is contained in his statement: "We are not so much concerned with the problem of Communist Party methods of achieving power, a known factor, as we are with the nature of the Communist State, an unknown factor; for it is on our assessment of this, whether we consider it to be good or evil, that we shall ultimately base our foreign policy."

My reply to this is that there is no such thing as "the Communist State," and that the methods employed by Communist Parties for effecting the transition from capitalism to Socialism vary from one country to another, are empiric and experimental.

The Russian Communist Party started out under Lenin with the idea, taken over from Marx and Engels, that the State was going to "wither away" after a transition period in which, after shattering the bourgeois State (that is, dissolving its civil service, army and police commands, corps of judges and teachers, and replacing them by men loyal to the new regime), the workers would rule through "the dictatorship of the proletariat," giving place gradually to an equalitarian society in which there would be no compulsion by central authorities.

Lenin also tried at first to make the "dictatorship of the proletariat" mean what Marx had intended it to mean, that is, "government of the great majority, by the great majority and for the great majority." The subsequent evolution of the "dictatorship of the proletariat" into meaning first the dictatorship of the Bolsheviks plus the Left Social Revolutionaries, then of the Communists alone and then, within the Communist Party, of the Politburo, and within that again largely of Stalin and a few henchmen, was a process not deriving from Communist doctrine but determined by the impact of many grim realities—principally the terrible struggle with the devastation and ruin left by the war and Allied intervention, complicated by a great drought; the backwardness of the peoples of the Soviet Union; the continuing hostility of the capitalist world. Even so, as compared with before the revolution, the Soviet peoples have made great strides in citizenship, there are the beginnings of social and industrial democracy in the collective farms, trade unions and co-operatives, and the seeds of political democracy and civil liberty are contained in the Stalin Constitution.

In the rest of Europe the Communist Parties began by obeying the dictates of the Comintern and slavishly copying the pattern of the organisation, strategy and tactics of the Soviet Communist Party, which had been carefully worked out by Lenin in the light of Russian conditions, but did not fit the conditions of European countries, let alone Britain or America. But in the last thirty years much has happened. The Communist Parties, after all, were not foreign importations in their respective countries, but Left-wing breakaways from the native, long-existing Social Democratic Parties. As democracy was destroyed and Fascist dictatorships established over most of Europe (beginning in Italy and Eastern Europe after the first world slump, spreading to Germany after the second and extended and aggravated all over the Continent by Hitler), the Communist Parties took the lead in the underground struggle of the resistance movements, identified themselves with the trade unions and the working class generally, and emerged after liberation as Parties with a strong sense of patriotism and national responsibility. To-day the big Communist Parties with power and political responsibilities in their own countries are working in co-operation with the other Parties deriving from the resistance movements, and notably with the Socialists—except where Transport House and Anglo-American pressure have artificially created a social stalemate and led the Socialists to commit political suicide and succumb to reaction by refusing to work with the Communists.

The Communists of Czechoslovakia are working in and for a Czechoslovak State which they had the lion's share in making and which is already a Parliamentary democracy based on Socialism. Leading Polish Communists like Jacob Berman have announced publicly that the mixed economic structure of the new Poland, so far ahead as politics can reckon with, will not be wholly Socialist, and carries with it the survival of different economic classes who should be represented by different political parties. The conclusion Berman drew was that when the danger from the underground reactionary armed bands had passed and the tension between the Great Powers relaxed to the point where the fear of war no longer poisoned public life and sharpened internal conflicts in the country, the national coalition would break up into Government and Opposition, as is normal in Parliamentary democracies except in a state of emergency. (President Benes told me last year that this, too, would be the future in Czechoslovakia, provided the Great Powers stopped making war talk.)

Poland's brilliant Minister of Trade and Industry, Hilary Minc, who is also a prominent Communist, told my Labour M.P. colleagues and myself when we talked with him (I acting as interpreter) that, although historical analogies were dangerous, he would point to the parallel with what happened after the French Revolution: the French paid a terrific price for being the first country that broke with the remains of feudalism in order to become a modern capitalist democracy.

But after they had broken the ice the rest of Europe was able to effect the transition by milder means. Similarly, he argued, the fact that the peoples of the Russian Empire had at terrific cost carried out a social revolution made it possible for the rest of Europe to effect the transition from capitalism to Socialism by less violent and extreme means. In Poland, for instance, he said, the transition could take place without having to resort to the dictatorship of the proletariat.

Having taken the trouble to have long talks, in order to find out what was their attitude to democracy, with most of the leading Communists in Europe, I conclude that this attitude is good faith. It is certainly good Marxism and in line with modern realities and recent history.

What is important in Britain is that we should recognise that if the Labour Party wants to carry out its election pledges, to stand by the workers and trade unionists of Europe and to help them base the reconstruction of Europe and the revival of democracy and political freedom in Europe on Socialism, then we must will the means as well as the end; we must recognise that there can be no Socialism except through the workers and their trade unions and political parties, that the Communists, or Communists and Socialists working in conjunction, by now represent most of the trade union and political leadership of the working class in most European countries and are there to stay. They can evolve, but they cannot be destroyed, even by a third world war.

If the tension between the Great Powers continues and increases, even the Social Democrats of Italy, Czechoslovakia and Poland will have to become harsh and dictatorial or else follow the example of the quisling Socialists of France. If, on the other hand, the tension relaxes and the fear of war disappears because Labour Britain insists upon having full trade and friendly political relations with Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union, the Communist Parties will not obstruct but will co-operate in the establishment of democratic, Socialist communities throughout Europe governed by parliamentary methods akin to our own, but varying from country to country. Democracy cannot develop nor even survive in a state of siege. Given peace and trade, the forces making for democracy and liberty in Europe, in a new social and economic context, are irresistible.

K. ZILLIACUS

House of Commons.

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JOHN LEHMANN

FRENCH SOCIALIST PARTY

SIR,—Members of the French Socialist Party (S.F.I.O.) who read your paper have noticed for a long time how biased are the reports of your "special correspondent" who describes developments in France from a systematically Stalinist point of view. We deplore this, both because it shows lack of objectivity and also because a closer understanding is necessary between European Socialists and especially between those of our two countries.

In your issue of Nov. 8, you seem to give credit to the infamous accusation thrown at us by the French Communist Party, namely that we Socialists are prepared to the last man to fling ourselves into the arms of de Gaulle rather than accept an alliance with the Communists.

That is an insulting statement. Our Party means to take the lead in the fight of Democrats and Socialists who are fully conscious that the totalitarian de Gaullist and Stalinist movements play into each others' hands. The "third force", in our opinion, is not a parliamentary formation of the Centre without a doctrine. On the contrary, it is a movement of workers, technicians and intellectuals who refuse to accept the fatality of war and the colonisation of Europe by one bloc or the other, who think that European unity on such a basis is the only means of reducing the antagonism between Russia and America. These are the views which your correspondent describes as super-Trotskyist, but we know that they are shared by many British Socialists.

Contrary to the statements made by your correspondent, the Socialist Party has regained entire regions, with a predominantly working-class or peasant population, in Brittany, in the Pas de Calais coalfields, in Limousin and in the Aude.

On the Trade Union side, the Communists have made an attempt to capture all key posts in the Confederation of Labour in order to use it for their political agitation. This has caused much division and demoralisation among trade unionists. Hence the movement, Force Ouvrière, whose aim is to concentrate on economic recovery and improvement of wages, and to restore political independence and T.U. democracy, which are included in the Charter of the Confederation.

As Harold Laski recently wrote, the French Communists have acted lately "with no other object than to deepen the confusion of an already chaotic situation." "Their relentless and, indeed, unscrupulous attacks upon the Socialists and their leaders have gone far to make impossible that unity of the workers in France upon the strength of which the very life of French democracy depends."

Your paper, too, recently described the policy of the Cominform as "disastrous," likely to strengthen reaction and weaken the democratic Left, and deliberately aimed at splitting the Socialist movement. Then was published an article ("Stalin and all that") expressing official Soviet views: Britain could trade profitably with Russia as well as the West provided Labour would not object to Communist policy in France and other European countries. (The fact that Clem Attlee is branded as a "social traitor," as well as Blum and Schumacher, by the Warsaw International, somewhat weakens the argument. And quoting the words of a Polish Christian Democrat boosting of this friendship with both Communists and Mikolajczyk was rather unfortunate.) Then came the attack on the French Socialists by your correspondent. What are we to conclude?

MARCEAU PIVERT
Secrétaire de la Fédération de la Seine,
Parti Socialiste.

[It is good to see that M. Pivert is alive to the Gaullist danger. The article of which he complains was an effort by a highly expert correspondent to give an objective survey of the situation. M. Pivert does nothing to explain why, if Socialists are as much opposed to de Gaulle as they are to Thorez, their tactics in the local government elections were so markedly helpful to the Rally of the French People; at Marseilles, in the Paris suburbs, and in many other places Socialist candidates appeared to come perilously close to direct collusion with the Rally. We understand their difficulty and, in recording and regretting it, we do not have to be "Stalinist." To people in this country, accustomed to see a continuous and intimate relation between the Labour Party and the Trade Unions, and interpenetration of their aims and policies, the present efforts of the French Socialists to split the C.G.T. in favour of what would seem to be pure Syndicalism—in other words to draw the teeth of the organised working-class in favour of de Gaulle, since de Gaulle has nothing left to fear except the threat of a general strike—seems little less than suicidal. For the rest, M. Pivert is apparently ignorant that it is the custom of British journals of opinion to print signed articles which do not conform with editorial policy. The article *Stalin and All That* was signed by Mr. Zilliacus, and our publication of it certainly does not imply, as our editorial columns have made clear, that we condone Soviet abuse of Mr. Attlee or the behaviour of Eastern European governments to Mr. Mikolajczyk, M. Maniu or any others.—ED., N.S. & N.]

POTATO RATIONING

SIR,—It is clear that potato rationing is absolutely necessary. It may be, too, that 3lb per week is the best that Mr. Strachey and his experts can possibly do if we are to make the meagre supply last until the next crop. Whilst many bellies may ache this winter, no amount of bellyaching will add to the supply.

But it has always been a part of the "fair-shares-for-all" policy to modify in some respects the allocation of equal shares by the attempt to supply the principle of "according to need." This policy has been successful in making special provision for children and pregnant women, for example, and it has been carried out in certain respects for particular sections of heavy workers. I cannot, therefore, understand why the Food Minister has not devised some differential rationing or allocation of potatoes.

The average weekly consumption of potatoes last year was 60 per cent. above the pre-war level, but the rise varied enormously amongst different sections of the community. When bread rationing was introduced, these difficulties were certainly enhanced because heavy workers could then only "fill up" on potatoes and vegetables.

Amongst my constituents there are a small number of salt workers. These tough and determined men work an eight-hour day, stripped to the barest minimum of clothing, in an atmosphere of tremendous steamy heat, scooping salt from foaming baths continuously kept at boiling point. They literally sweat at their arduous work for long periods at a time. So, of course, do other heavy workers. It is an absolute necessity for these men to consume large quantities of "filling" food. Most of them were accustomed to consume between 19 and 30 ounces of bread at a meal. Whilst they now get packed sandwiches from the Civic Restaurant, they receive no extra individual rations. The introduction of bread rationing certainly meant an exceptional increase in their consumption of potatoes.

Potato rationing will hit these men below the belt more than most people. Some of them have allotments; some have not; but it does appear to me that precisely because the cut, which will operate effectively for a large number of urban workers, is necessarily so drastic, some provision ought to be made for the really hard cases.

S. T. SWINGLER
House of Commons.

YESTERDAY AND TO-MORROW

SIR,—Perhaps I might duck some of the flying glass and elbow my way into this little battle. Since I wrote about Ireland, I have received twelve private letters of abuse, eleven of them anonymous, and all accusing me of every crime, including the crime of writing for money. There is really nothing these English writers won't descend to.

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Two points, I think, emerge from these private and public letters. The first is that while the new Ireland can take any amount of praise, the slightest criticism, however well meant, rouses bewilderment and indignation. The reaction is almost pathological. After all, I am not the first person to notice this snuggling into the past, this turning inwards, this small-time nationalism. The trend was perhaps inevitable. Ireland took on an Empire and won, and her tragedy is that nothing she does in her future can ever be so glorious as her past.

The second point is that all these replies—or what pass for replies—are almost always irrelevant. It is rather like a speech by Hitler. Because trains run on railway lines, the North Pole is cold. Take Lord Killanin, who follows me about, sometimes bleating, sometimes angry, and always irrelevant. It was only the other day that in reply to the charge of parochialism he pointed out the cultural advantages of having an aunt in America. Think of the informative letters you get, he said. He now serves up much the same argument again and points out, among other things, "Ireland's attempts to enter Uno" and her part in the P.I.C.A.O. I do not know what this is supposed to prove, but let me say—very, very slowly—that attempts to join Uno, or even membership of the delicious P.I.C.A.O., do not make a nation more or less parochial.

Then there is Mr. Bardsley, whose letter completely baffles me. "The fundamental fact in Irish political life to-day," he says, "is the foreign policy of Ernest Bevin." There must be some confusion here. I was writing about Ireland, not America. My mistake. Perhaps Mr. Bardsley intended his letter for another paper. Or perhaps we shall wake up soon and find that he didn't write it at all.

Mr. O'Dubhteagh is much more reasonable and much more persuasive. Why shouldn't the Irish have their 1916 room, he asks me. The answer is—no reason at all, so long as it only commemorates the heroism of the past, the incredible courage of the Easter rising, surely one of the most disinterested rebellions of our time. I was using the museum as a symbol of something quite different and Mr. O'Dubhteagh is far too intelligent not to know it. Fortunately there is no reason for me to take him up point by point, for he gives the show away by admitting to "the small-time nationalism," which was precisely what my article was about. (Is Mr. O'Dubhteagh doing a Bardsley on me, perhaps?) Indeed I should not be answering his letter at all but for his remark that, "It looks as if Labour in England may have shot its bolt by the time Eire gets its progressive government." Mr. Sean MacBride is an able and energetic politician, but it has yet to be proved that his party has anything to do with the "progressive forces" of this or any other European country.

HUGH MASSINGHAM

THE STATE AND GAMBLING

SIR,—Nearing the end of a perusal of Mr. Woodrow Wyatt's articles, in which he advocates management, by the State, of all gambling, I was agreeably astonished, as an anti-gambler on economic and political grounds, to read "The profession of bookmaking should be made illegal." Has it occurred to him that the legal banning of bookmakers and gambling paraphernalia would render managerial activity in that line unnecessary? The impulse to gamble, which he regards as ineradicable, would find vent in amateur channels; but the transactions would be so rare and small, compared with what they now are, that the legal maxim *De Minimis* could safely be applied. But Mr. Wyatt's State, having abolished the bookmaker, would itself go into the gambling trade, and, by acting as a haphazard distributor of wealth, would nullify Socialism with progressive seriousness. I could see consistency in such a proposal coming from a Tory like Sir Alan Herbert.

Mr. Wyatt says, "gambling is a luxury." Surely winning is the only luxury about it? Losing is painful.

His argument would apply with equal force to the profession of brothel-keeper—which, exercised by the State in a cautious way, might "help a little to brighten the days of austerity."

JOHN KIRKBY

ENGLISH AND THE B.B.C.

SIR,—It cannot have escaped notice that in the B.B.C. silver-jubilee celebration there was one most surprising omission. Every department of radio was reviewed with the capital exception of language. The relation of broadcasting to the mother tongue was not discussed. (Dr. I. A. Richards's talks were on a special theme.) Nothing was said about the effect of radio upon everyday speech, or about the endless difficulties that have had to be overcome or put aside in twenty-five years—a period during which the British people have become speech-conscious as never before.

The only remark I have noted comes from Mr. Bernard Shaw, to the effect that listening to the news is doing much "to spread presentable northern English." This is curious, for whatever the B.B.C. standard may be, it is clearly not northern. Indeed, the commonest of all complaints is that Scotland and the North of England are officially treated as though they had no place in the present and future of spoken English.

Mr. Henry Reed's comment in your current issue could not be more exactly timed. He has been particularly distressed by some of the accents heard in the talks on French novelists. He ought not, I think, to have fallen upon Mr. T. W. Earp. True, he has some markedly individual sounds, but his appreciation of Stendhal was beautifully clear and delivered in firm and rounded English. If Mr. Reed had chosen his examples from some in "The Case for Prose" series, he would have had a better case.

He is indubitably right in saying that "the degradation of standard speech proceeds at the most alarming rate." Every one of us seniors who retains a critical memory of English before 1890, or even 1900, is aware that a general change, surely for the worse, has come over the "educated" speech of Britain. Mr. Reed refers to "our drawling triphthongisations"—what a word! We know, of course, what he means—the indefinable modifications of the Long A and O. Try this by listening to a debate in the House of Commons, or in a university Union. Or take an obvious illustration from radio. In a Shakespeare play the vowels of most actors, happily, will be good and full; but in plays of any kind a young actress who utters the round O would stand out. In their vowels, and of course not theirs alone, the sound of the French *EU* is unmistakable.

Could the B.B.C. set out to restore the vowels, let us say, of Asquith and Balfour, of, among living public men, Lord Samuel and Lord Simon? My submission is that they could and should. As for the daily irritants we know so well, might it not be laid down in hard terms that there is no more need for the *Indiar-office* and the *idear-of*, than there is for us to hear of *Mista Eden* and *Westminsta Abbey*. Yet in these things, I grieve to say, the compilers of the finest modern pronouncing dictionaries are on the side of the enemy. They tell us, following the calamitous ruling of Sweet, that we are not wrong in speaking of the *Bah* of the House. Must we then descend upon the *Fah East*?

S. K. RATCLIFFE

RAVEL

SIR,—In face of so positive an assertion by the musical adviser to the Decca Recording Co. I can only express regret that my ears should have deceived me into traducing M. Münch. Yet the assertion was not made lightly, nor in this case did I trust my own ears alone: two other persons—both of them trained listeners—confirmed my persuasion that the sound, at this point in the recording, could only be that of a theatre organ. Even though illusive, the effect is disagreeable.

EDWARD SACKVILLE WEST

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JOHN MURRAY

BOOKS IN GENERAL

Dear Doctor Neutral,

Before you returned to your students in your small, rich and happy country, you asked me to tell you of a book about England which would give you a background to the present crisis, which would show how the England of the present day has come to be; a book that would tell you whether we are an accident to the English tradition or the child of it. The books in your libraries, you said, are now fatally out of date. They were out of date nearly thirty years ago. At that time we were considered generally to be a nation of rich, mad, drunken aristocrats, merchants or country gentlemen, with hidden private lives, copious private means, and peculiar sexual habits; wherever we went confidence shone like the sun, for we were known to have diddled democracy and to have kept it in its place. For anyone who came from England and who had not gone through the common English mill of Public School and University, this view of his country was so startling that he had to pinch himself to make sure he was alive and English; and indeed, the foreign host was equally startled. How, he asked, could England have produced a sport so strange? That question (I gather from you) is again anxiously asked in the surviving fragments of what we still call the Continent. What is this un-English England which is now seen uncouthly rising through the fog?

The convenient answer would be to recommend to your students a new book, *The Character of England**, which contains a number of essays by respectable hands and which attempts to define the essential English spirit or habit of mind in its relation to the community and the individual, to government and the law, to finance and industry, science and education, literature, painting, the home, and so on. The names are sound: Jacquetta and Christopher Hawkes open with a history of the land and the people, and write with a sensibility to landscape which is unique in this book; G. M. Young puts down his pithy judgments on the condition of government; Lady Violet Bonham Carter writes wittily of childhood and education; Richard Law, Sir Maurice Powicke, Basil Willey, Victoria Sackville West, Lord Kennet, James Laver, are among the other names. A safe liberal selection: publications of the British Council will already have made their point of view and their method familiar. In a few thousand words the authors submit their subjects to an historical commentary, pausing here and there to show how compromise, vagueness, reticence, mildness, individualism and the love of liberty have decisively intervened; and then, on their last page, one after the other, these authors wake up frightened from their dream. I will put it in the politician's English of Mr. Law:

> . . . is it not certain that a community so loosely organised as the community of England has been, will be at a desperate disadvantage in a world which, if it is not to disintegrate utterly, will demand an increasing degree of organisation, an increased measure of regimentation. And if the community is to be planned and regimented in England as the condition of its survival, what is to become of the Englishman, and of his easy, loose-fitting relationship with the community of which he is a member.

And I will add the harder words of the sagacious Mr. G. M. Young:

> After Waterloo we were for the most part occupied with problems raised by the conversion of an agricultural into an industrial state. So, on a sanguine view, it might be thought that we are back at the corresponding point on the historical spiral. And so we are: but with the difference that we can neither feed ourselves, nor, without foreign assistance, buy our food, nor can we even guess how long this period of impoverished dependence will be drawn out. Since the Norman Conquest there has been no such solution of continuity in our history.

This is not going to help you very much, you will say; you are simply borne back to your original question. You are back in 1939. Earlier, in my opinion; I would date this book in the neighbourhod of 1913.

I wonder if you will be puzzled by the peculiar initial assumption behind *The Character of England*. The book deals, you notice, with geographical England, that is to say, Wales, Scotland and Ireland are excluded. We live in a country where, as you have often observed, nothing is known by its right name. The belief that there is a country called England, inhabited by Englishmen, has been one of the hitherto harmless and respectable illusions of the inhabitants of the British Isles. Detestable to the Welsh, laughable to the Irish, incredible to the Scots—whose intolerant passions have nevertheless combined, by their opposition, to keep the myth of the tolerant English alive—England and the Englishman have had a largely imaginary existence since the huge migrations of the industrial revolution. The idea of England is a religious survival or has been turned into one. It is an utterance of ritual or magic practised in the mind for poetical purposes and with the object of creating faith. The national character has become our private cult and perhaps, when three or four tribes are bound together as we are, it is necessary to have some neutral ground, some altar to which we all bow and in which no one believes too much. But when we look back upon the large number of books that have been written on the English character since 1914, we do begin to be alarmed at an attempt to make the cult so important. It smells of revivalism, that manifestation of earthly despair. How anxious, we say, the mongrel is to claim a pedigree. Looking to the Continent we must be struck by the fact that our immediate predecessors in Imperial power, the Spaniards, made just such a cult of Castile, a cult which became the more encrusted and intense as decadance proceeded, and imposed its puritanic restriction on the diverse spirit and violent energy of the country. The worshippers of England have too chaste a conception of their land. And an inexact one.

The aim of the editor of *The Character of England* has been to persuade his authors to expound values rather than events, to discover the abiding spirit rather than to dwell upon the passing conditions. That is all very well. If we went to an English Public School we are included in Lady Violet Bonham Carter's researches; but if we did not, then we are beyond them. We were not brought up on the Classics; in consequence, we have been untouched by the Greek spirit which (it turns out) is "very English." What on earth are we if we happen to have gone to the elementary schools, the pseudo-Public schools, or, worse still, to the progressive schools of England? Of course, as a foreigner, you will have noticed how the notion of exclusiveness reigns in every class, even though we belong merely to the class which gets its coal once a month in contrast to the lesser breeds who get it once a week; and perhaps, wary of being overcharmed by the text of this book, you will have turned first to the illustrations. You will be surprised, in this contemporary attempt at a character of our country, to find that almost all of the many beautiful or ingenious illustrations to this volume refer to things of the past. There are political posters showing our hatred of dictators, but the dictator is Napoleon; there are posters calling upon workers to unite, but the date is 1806. There is even a handbill calling upon the people to resist the private monopoly in the use of gas in London, but the date is 1873. How advanced we were! These pictures have the merit of illustrating the cantankerous and even glamorous independence of the English mind in the past, but it is an odd fixation and the cult of Englishness is always afflicted by it. Perhaps there is truth here: English revolutions, you have often been told, have been violent or drastic attempts to go backwards, as Cobbett wanted to do, into a better future. But, Doctor Neutral, in your fat and progressive little country, you will be a little shocked, I can't help feeling, by the lack of modern instance. I remember the first beautiful building I ever saw. It was Knole and I was twenty years old. It seemed to me then—such is our urban scene—un-English.

Those pictures of unspoiled villages in the Cotswolds, of teams against the sky ploughing the ancient Downs, those owlish towers of country churches, those sweeps of parkland where, distantly and well-placed, the sedate country houses or reckless mansions gaze back at us with the sad, courtly eyes of satisfied old men through the trees; or, to be more intimate, those lively human scenes in innyards and schoolroom, in drawing-rooms and other sociable places, where we see a plump and well-natured people conducting themselves with the comely placidity of their race—in all these pictures which we send you from our past, you see an England that we have never known. How beautiful! How longed for! We who live today have not the right to claim kinship with these people or their setting. They are foreign to us. If we are English, they are not. It would be hypocrisy—skilful though we are said to be in that art—to claim kinship with them, or to pretend to emulate the beauty they have created. Fatal belief that this—this England we export to you—is an England we have ever known. We are the disinherited. Yet we go on circulating this legend of private amenity when the mass of English people have been educated by the State, if they were educated at all, for the last 70 years; when millions live in State-owned houses, when in so many departments of life they have willingly, earnestly, fervently given up their liberty for a fuller life. The individual has been quarrelsome in his relation to the community—yes; but he has called in the State to help him in the unequal struggle against the public lethargy. The decisions of the last two years which perturb many of the writers in this book and which, I know, have shocked you because you, like ourselves, are afraid of totalitarianism, are not a sudden break with the past. They are not the end of individualism. For millions, they are the beginning of it. These decisions are the last act of a long process, not the first acts of a new one. They are efforts to get back, if you like, to our inheritance. The real break was not two years ago, but as many of these writers really agree—Lord Kennet on our towns and Sir Ernest Barker in his summing up—at the industrial revolution. If, as Lord Kennet reminds us, the old individualism and self-interest—which we call love of liberty—had not been so strong, if we were not so eccentric, or, as Henry Adams would have said, so evasive and lazy in mind and egocentric, we would not have obstructed, generation after generation, the building of more beautiful and healthier towns. The variant of the modern planned state which we attempt is an effort of the disinherited to recapture the gracious, genial, orderly and modest English genius which the violence of the industrial revolution robbed us of.

You will be glad to see that Miss Rebecca West, in one of the most energetic and lively essays of the book, writes with spirit on the effect of foreigners on the English character. It appears that, like artists—who are, in many cases, treated with a pity which is otherwise reserved for strangers—the rest of the population of England finds the strain of Englishness too much from time to time. To belong to the mutual admiration society without a holiday becomes intolerable. The tension arising from the possession of political genius becomes too great, the subtle balancing of social and political relationships too exhausting. We need a holiday from our religion: the beauty of the national character. We go to the continent to get, as Miss Rebecca West says, a second chance. For artists, for writers, it is the chance of a lifetime which, characteristically, our present revolutionary regime denies us. The English, John Evelyn concluded after his travels, could have had better artists in his time, if (like the Italians) they had not so carefully cultivated their estates.

V. S. PRITCHETT

* *The Character of England.* Edited by Sir Ernest Barker. O.U.P. 30s.

THE WORLD STRUGGLE

Speaking Frankly. By JAMES F. BYRNES. *Heinemann.* 21s.

The Struggle for the World. By JAMES BURNHAM. *Cape.* 10s. 6d.

During the two years in which he was Secretary of State Mr. Byrnes flew backwards and forwards between Washington, Moscow, Paris and London arguing and bargaining with Mr. Molotov. His record leaves no doubt that he was genuinely seeking agreement with Russia on the Treaties, that the U.S. was then ready for compromises, and that its imperialistic and anti-Soviet trend has been violently accelerated by Moscow's negations. Mr. Molotov's ingenuity in the technique of obstruction extorts Mr. Byrnes' admiration. Mr. Bevin comes in for only an occasional honourable mention; even when Mr. Byrnes refers to Mr. Bevin's undiplomatic bluntness there is a sigh of envy in his voice. But Britain and France appear as mere supernumeraries.

The conclusion Mr. Byrnes reaches is that the Soviet Union follows the usual pattern of revolutionary States in returning to the traditional diplomacy of the pre-revolutionary era. Geography, economics and an autocratic system of government have dictated that the U.S.S.R., maintaining continuity with Tsarist Russia, should want to dominate Manchuria, the Balkans, and the Dardanelles. Mr. Byrnes bases this deduction on the story of German-Soviet relations between 1939 and 1941. The chapter in which he reveals the nature of Soviet demands on Hitler and the reasons for the breakdown of the German-Russian pact is one of the most interesting in a book, whose chief value is the publication of quotations from documents that in this old-fashioned country would have been guarded by the Foreign Office as strictly secret and unpublishable for fifty years.

Among other incidental disclosures in Mr. Byrnes' book are the fact that sharp differences between America and Russia had begun before Mr. Roosevelt's death—sharp Notes had passed between Roosevelt and Stalin on the Russian interpretation of Yalta; and that Maisky, an experienced "Westerner" among Soviet diplomats, admitted that the U.S.S.R. had gone too far in seizing German property, was repudiated by Molotov and for that reason, in Mr. Byrnes' view, then withdrawn from the diplomatic service. Such detailed stories make entertaining reading. But they are far less important than the picture we get of the mind of Mr. Byrnes, who is unreflecting in his acceptance of the current American view, simple-minded in his denials that America is in any way "imperialist" in her expansion, and so innocent of what Marxism is that he does not even understand why negotiations with the Soviet Union are different from those with another capitalist country. He passes, almost unconsciously, from the Roosevelt conception of accepting spheres of influence to the surely untenable view that America, without actually deciding on war, should drive the U.S.S.R. from Eastern Europe.

Mr. Burnham deals with the same subject from precisely the opposite point of view. He belongs to that small but influential group of men who have been trained in Marxism, revolted against Soviet discipline and Communist methods and became the strident advocates of a new anti-Comintern Axis. His thesis is that Communism represents the one challenge of our age; that all Communists everywhere form a single conspiracy, directed and organised from Moscow; that Liberals of all types who work with Communists for any cause, however worthy in itself, are dupes; that it is better for the earth itself to be destroyed by the release of atomic energy—a possibility he takes seriously—than for the slave State of Communism to be established over the world; that the United States by vacillation may make this finally destructive war inevitable or, worse still, may lose it; that the United States by resolution to outlawing Communism in America and supporting defensively and offensively every anti-Communist government, however corrupt and brutal, may defeat this supreme threat to humanity.

Mr. Burnham's book is powerfully written and its thesis is strengthened by his frank admission that America is now an Imperialist Power which, in spite of the adolescence of the American mind and the confusion of its political and diplomatic purposes—he says harder things about America than any European would care to do—ought openly to seek to dominate the world. This domination, in his view, should not be achieved by direct rule, but by an "imperial federation" composed at the outset of the United States, Britain and the Dominions. He admits that America might lose her own conception of liberty in the process of destroying Communism, and he is prepared to grant that America is morally vulnerable. Lynching, however, is unimportant in comparison with the slavery of Communism. Writing for present-day America Mr. Burnham does not feel it necessary to prove that Soviet rule is utterly vile in every respect; he merely refers the reader, as to final authorities of equal and irrefutable value and authenticity, to a list of the most extreme anti-Soviet writers from Krivitsky to Kravchenko.

Mr. Burnham is worth reading because, as a student of Marxism, he is at least politically literate. Reading *The Struggle for the World* is reading Communist propaganda in reverse. This, one feels, is what the majority of the Politburo would like to be true. Communism becomes a single giant conspiracy, almost but not quite certain to conquer the whole world. No divisions on tactics or strategy apparently divide these Moscow supermen; American Imperialism is now the only serious enemy, and its defeat in the last fight between capitalism and Communism will begin the era of world government and Socialist peace. All both sides have to do therefore is to prepare for war. Lenin was right in saying "*The only choice is*: Either bourgeois or Socialist [i.e. Communist] ideology. There is no middle course (for humanity has not created a 'third' ideology, and, moreover, in a society torn by class antagonisms there can never be a non-class or above-class ideology) . . ." True, says Mr. Burnham, in effect; so let America lead German, Italian, and French Fascism, renovate Japanese militarism, the corrupt and disintegrating government of the Kuomintang and all the other anti-Communist sheiks and dictators into one single glorious crusade. If the result is to devastate or disintegrate the world, then it is a world well lost.

On this thesis three comments must at the moment suffice. First Mr. Burnham, while frank about other aspects of the Marxian thesis, does not consider the fundamental one. Is it in the nature of capitalism in general, and of American capitalism in particular, to overcome its "contradictions" and to unite the world, including its workers, for a single purpose? Why should an American victory end international war or finally settle the class struggle? Secondly, if it is true that world Fascism is the only alternative to world Communism—which seems to follow from Mr. Burnham's argument—why should the ordinary man, particularly the ordinary worker, prefer to follow Burnham rather than Stalin? Thirdly, the fact that Lenin and Mr. Burnham agree that we are approaching a period when, in terms of power, everyone must be on one or other side of the barricades, does not prove that no "third ideology" exists amongst individuals, groups or nations or that the perhaps illogical persistence of such an ideology is of no political significance. England, for instance, is clearly only of minor importance in the minds of Stalin or Mr. Burnham; their military advisers agree that in the event of war England is no more than a useful aircraft carrier for the American forces and that most of its inhabitants will be completely wiped off the map by atomic weapons early in the war. In this country, however, the prospect does not encourage us to accept either ideology. Mr. Burnham's thesis is far too simple—as oversimplified as Moscow's. Russia is in no position to conquer the world; she is on the defensive, and we probably have some years to go before a war is even militarily possible. The mass of people in Europe, Asia, and indeed throughout the world, do not belong to either camp. They may of course be forced in a world conflict to take sides, but if so, the battle for civilization will be lost anyway. Mr. Burnham tries to disguise it, but his recipe is really one of aggression, born of despair.

KINGSLEY MARTIN

THE YEW TREE'S SHADE

In a Glass Darkly. By SHERIDAN LE FANU. *Lehmann.* 8s. 6d.

A Strange Adventure in the Life of Miss Laura Mildmay. By SHERIDAN LE FANU. *Home and Van Thal.* 8s. 6d.

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In the last years of Sheridan Le Fanu's life, his son relates, his days were given up to thoughts of supernatural manifestations and his nights to writing about them; waking at two each morning in his gloomily furnished bedroom in Dublin he would brew tea and set down, by the light of a single candle, another of his strange tales.

How much of this is reflected in the stories of *In A Glass Darkly*, published in 1872, a year before his death? The style, easy, gentlemanly, sharply clear, as befits a one-time barrister, does not at once suggest that here was a man as haunted as any of his characters. And though the atmosphere is unmistakably lowering and sombre, it does not depend on borrowings from night's terrors. Out of so many of Le Fanu's stories rises the raw autumnal damp of a provincial town, with seedy inn, cathedral close, lawyer's office, gargoyles, rainy elms and rank cemetery grass: things not in themselves evil but tokens of the ancestral past in which evil has been able to take root. In such surroundings the flogged sailor first rose out of the mind of the retired sea-captain, soberly thinking of marriage; here Mr. Jennings, the high church bachelor clergyman had his first sight (one of the great moments in ghost literature) of the eyes of the monkey-like creature that was to haunt him to death. We are reminded, too, how formidable a power in that claustrophilic time was the house itself; shutting out the problems of the larger world, the heavy walls held and nourished all the fear, remorse and chagrin of the long lives passed within them. Le Fanu himself was troubled much by dreams of a vast and ruinous old mansion which threatened to crumble about him. This guilty fear takes varying forms in his work, where there are no haunted houses, only haunted men.

The most disturbing feature of Le Fanu's stories is their inescapable justice: their recurring motif is the retribution of sin. The world in which the doomed man walks might have risen not from the madness of Poe, but from the Presbyterian conscience of Stevenson: what could be more frightening than the contrast of its orderly calm and the offender's punishment? Even in the racy *Dragon Volant*, which has no ghost, the adulterer is made to suffer live burial; but most often it is the middle aged professional man who is hounded to death by devils of his own making. Born out of some distant act of cruelty, lust, impiety, perverted love they spring, widely visible, horribly palpable; the thorn hedge cannot keep out the singularly ill-looking man who has come for Captain Barton, nor Newgate bars keep the spectre of the living victim from the unjust judge in his dark, warm, wainscoted London house. But none is more dreadful than the beast of *Green Tea*—("dark and hairy with original sin," says Mr. Pritchett in his brilliant introduction, ". . . a piece of sexual symbolism if there ever was one")—keeping its sickly, malignant red-eyed watch on

Mr. Jennings in that elm-darkened house in Richmond. "There is in its motion," declares the poor clergyman "an indefinable power to dissipate thought." And the imperturbable doctor's words after the tragedy: "I should have first dimmed and ultimately sealed that inner eye which Mr. Jennings had inadvertently opened"—are they, in their implications, really so reassuring?

"Outside," begins *A Strange Adventure in the Life of Miss Laura Mildmay*, "the moon is shining over a solemn winter landscape." The night is brilliant with frost; the lake gleams; while to the grey stone vicarage hard against the churchyard comes a strange visitor, an infant goblin or changeling. Close follows evil Captain Torquil, throwing a sinister shadow over the quiet town. But though a break in the period of terror destroys the tension, embedded in the rambling narrative is a story as rich and dire as any in the Victorian demonology—*Madam Crowl's Ghost*. Death, kept at bay for over ninety years, cannot be for ever cheated by the old creature's wig, rouge, mouseskin eyebrows and heels like ninepins; nor will he rid her of the horrible secret that she has kept for three quarters of a century. She must return, grudging and unrepentant, to shake off the burden. In the Jamesian manner she attempts to pass it on to a child.

The new edition of *Twilight Stories* (originally published in 1873) must surely be the first modern reprint of any work by that lively novelist, Rhoda Broughton. But how misleading is the title, and, even more, Mr. Felix Kelly's delicate cover design of a lady in the deepest mourning picking her way at dusk through the tombstones of a wintry churchyard. For did ever writer put up more resistance to her own ghosts? Here are no werewolves, no vampires; such visitants are not of a kind that a well-bred if unconventional English lady might be expected to acknowledge. These stories, with their curiously brutal shocks, and characters half way into one novel or another, are hot with summer, fragrant with roses and clematis, bright with morning, and dextrous in avoiding the sentimental. Mrs. Montresor's pretty drawing room is thronged with visitors; down the Rhine the pleasure boat makes its lazy passage; the guests at the country house are young and careless, and they are *never alone*. Rhoda Broughton will not compromise by calling night winter or ivied grange to her aid. It is no accident that of her two most macabre apparitions, one makes its appearance at mid-morning in a little Mayfair house, "fresh as a daisy, clean as a cherry, bright as a seraph's face," the other in a fashionable Lucerne hotel during the hour of the midday *table d'hote*. Sometimes the daylight witchery gains point from her quizzical detachment; in one clever story a neurotic girl foresees in a dream and perhaps brings on a murder. However, as a writer Miss Broughton finds silliness more to her taste than sin; as a result her tale of a demon lover interrupting a honeymoon is spoilt by the absurd innocence of the victim. Such an error her uncle Le Fanu could never have made. The best of the stories is not sinister at all. In this a girl of sixteen is visited by her lover, a young sailor drowned at sea; the wet figure chills the hot summer night, affecting her, not with fear but with a pang of strange disappointment. Yet with an ironic twist the author has the story mumbled out as the reminiscence of an old fat woman who has outlived a husband and five strong sons. For all the many births and deaths that she has known, this youthful brief love affair seems the one memorable episode in her long life. But the story is complete without the ghost.

Although *Twilight Stories* is the least typical of Miss Broughton's books, her personality is not for a moment hidden by the odd subject. It is recorded that a band of nostalgic Arctic explorers under Captain Markham of the *Alert* named an ice-bound peak Mount Rhoda. It was surely not as a writer of winter's tales that Miss Broughton was so honoured but as a chronicler of feminine absurdity and charm, of drowsy summer afternoons, of the attractiveness of youth and its precarious happiness—things bright and perishing which stand out even in her ghost stories.

NAOMI LEWIS

TRAVEL BY PROXY

A Book of Voyages. Edited by PATRICK O'BRIAN. With Decorations by Joan Burton. *Home and Van Thal.* 15s.

Those who regret, without too much bitterness, the present restrictions on foreign travel, may discover in this *Book of Voyages* the anodyne which is all that they require. They enter the carriages and ships assembled by Mr. O'Brian. They say good-bye to their friends, who are too angry to sit still and enjoy armchair travelling; and they whirl off at once into the most varied scenery and the most diverse predicaments.

This anthology is largely drawn from Churchill's great Collection of Voyages first printed in 1704. For the amusement of the editor and the general reader a number of other forgotten books of the same period have also been searched; but scholars are rightly warned not to take offence at work which is no concern of theirs. The result is a series of miscellaneous narratives, from one to fifty pages in length, in which travellers of every condition in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, noblemen and missionaries, sailors and diplomats, tell their own stories. They are preluded by a minimum of biographical, bibliographical information and a sequence of vignettes which give with sufficient verve and grace a clue to what follows in the different narratives.

On the surface the charm of this old travel literature lies partly in the sheer diversity of human experience recorded here, partly in the varying relation of reader to writer. There are Unpleasant Voyages, excruciating ordeals of other men in storm or starvation now enjoyed at a long remove of time and place. There are Pleasant Voyages, semi-idyllic and almost effortless for the traveller, whom the reader honestly envies and desires to accompany. Of this second type the long extract at the beginning of Mr. O'Brian's book is a fine example. The iron curtains across Central Europe (we may say) are now impenetrable: very well, go with Lady Craven in 1786 from Venice to Warsaw and St. Petersburg and down through Tartary to Sevastopol, go a thousand miles and play the darlings of autocracy together, for Prince Potemkin has given orders that your hospitality shall be both profuse and efficient. There is nothing to do but enjoy the limitless unfolding of an unknown landscape where even the degradation of multitudes becomes only an item of the picturesque. Convicts chained in gangs are working in the street as Lady Craven passes by. A Jew is thrust out of his house to give Lady Craven a night's lodging. Cossacks are commanded into mock combat for her entertainment, while military governors delight to arrange for the peasantry to sing their native songs. Nevertheless, or because of this, it is a Pleasant Voyage.

However, whether the stories collected here are of shipwreck or champagne, they can be judged by one criterion of excellence only; for the compiler has barred the test of historical interest or importance. That criterion is the narrator's ability to revive the impression of an unforgettable scene. The Emperor of China on a hunting expedition, a storm-beaten ship moving

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THE WORLD STRUGGLE

Speaking Frankly. By JAMES F. BYRNES. *Heinemann.* 21*s.*

The Struggle for the World. By JAMES BURNHAM. *Cape.* 10*s.* 6*d.*

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Mr. Jennings in that elm-darkened house in Richmond. "There is in its motion," declares the poor clergyman "an indefinable power to dissipate thought." And the imperturbable doctor's words after the tragedy: "I should have first dimmed and ultimately sealed that inner eye which Mr. Jennings had inadvertently opened"—are they, in their implications, really so reassuring?

"Outside," begins *A Strange Adventure in the Life of Miss Laura Mildmay*, "the moon is shining over a solemn winter landscape." The night is brilliant with frost; the lake gleams; while to the grey stone vicarage hard against the churchyard comes a strange visitor, an infant goblin or changeling. Close follows evil Captain Torquil, throwing a sinister shadow over the quiet town. But though a break in the period of terror destroys the tension, embedded in the rambling narrative is a story as rich and dire as any in the Victorian demonology—*Madam Crowl's Ghost*. Death, kept at bay for over ninety years, cannot be for ever cheated by the old creature's wig, rouge, mouseskin eyebrows and heels like ninepins; nor will he rid her of the horrible secret that she has kept for three quarters of a century. She must return, grudging and unrepentant, to shake off the burden. In the Jamesian manner she attempts to pass it on to a child.

The new edition of *Twilight Stories* (originally published in 1873) must surely be the first modern reprint of any work by that lively novelist, Rhoda Broughton. But how misleading is the title, and, even more, Mr. Felix Kelly's delicate cover design of a lady in the deepest mourning picking her way at dusk through the tombstones of a wintry churchyard. For did ever writer put up more resistance to her own ghosts? Here are no werewolves, no vampires; such visitants are not of a kind that a well-bred if unconventional English lady might be expected to acknowledge. These stories, with their curiously brutal shocks, and characters half way into one novel or another, are hot with summer, fragrant with roses and clematis, bright with morning, and dextrous in avoiding the sentimental. Mrs. Montresor's pretty drawing room is thronged with visitors; down the Rhine the pleasure boat makes its lazy passage; the guests at the country house are young and careless, and they are *never alone*. Rhoda Broughton will not compromise by calling night, winter or ivied grange to her aid. It is no accident that of her two most macabre apparitions, one makes its appearance at mid-morning in a little Mayfair house, "fresh as a daisy, clean as a cherry, bright as a seraph's face," the other in a fashionable Lucerne hotel during the hour of the midday *table d'hote*. Sometimes the daylight witchery gains point from her quizzical detachment; in one clever story a neurotic girl foresees in a dream and perhaps brings on a murder. However, as a writer Miss Broughton finds silliness more to her taste than sin; as a result her tale of a demon lover interrupting a honeymoon is spoilt by the absurd innocence of the victim. Such an error her uncle Le Fanu could never have made. The best of the stories is not sinister at all. In this a girl of sixteen is visited by her lover, a young sailor drowned at sea; the wet figure chills the hot summer night, affecting her, not with fear but with a pang of strange disappointment. Yet with an ironic twist the author has the story mumbled out as the reminiscence of an old fat woman who has outlived a husband and five strong sons. For all the many births and deaths that she has known, this youthful brief love affair seems the one memorable episode in her long life. But the story is complete without the ghost.

Although *Twilight Stories* is the least typical of Miss Broughton's books, her personality is not for a moment hidden by the odd subject. It is recorded that a band of nostalgic Arctic explorers under Captain Markham of the *Alert* named an ice-bound peak Mount Rhoda. It was surely not as a writer of winter's tales that Miss Broughton was so honoured but as a chronicler of feminine absurdity and charm, of drowsy summer afternoons, of the attractiveness of youth and its precarious happiness—things bright and perishing which stand out even in her ghost stories.

NAOMI LEWIS

TRAVEL BY PROXY

A Book of Voyages. Edited by PATRICK O'BRIAN. With Decorations by Joan Burton. *Home and Van Thal.* 15*s.*

Those who regret, without too much bitterness, the present restrictions on foreign travel, may discover in this *Book of Voyages* the anodyne which is all that they require. They enter the carriages and ships assembled by Mr. O'Brian. They say good-bye to their friends, who are too angry to sit still and enjoy armchair travelling; and they whirl off at once into the most varied scenery and the most diverse predicaments.

This anthology is largely drawn from Churchill's great Collection of Voyages first printed in 1704. For the amusement of the editor and the general reader a number of other forgotten books of the same period have also been searched; but scholars are rightly warned not to take offence at work which is no concern of theirs. The result is a series of miscellaneous narratives, from one to fifty pages in length, in which travellers of every condition in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, noblemen and missionaries, sailors and diplomats, tell their own stories. They are preluded by a minimum of biographical, bibliographical information and a sequence of vignettes which give with sufficient verve and grace a clue to what follows in the different narratives.

On the surface the charm of this old travel literature lies partly in the sheer diversity of human experience recorded here, partly in the varying relation of reader to writer. There are Unpleasant Voyages, excruciating ordeals of other men in storm or starvation now enjoyed at a long remove of time and place. There are Pleasant Voyages, semi-idyllic and almost effortless for the traveller, whom the reader honestly envies and desires to accompany. Of this second type the long extract at the beginning of Mr. O'Brian's book is a fine example. The iron curtains across Central Europe (we may say) are now impenetrable: very well, go with Lady Craven in 1786 from Venice to Warsaw and St. Petersburg and down through Tartary to Sevastopol, go a thousand miles and play the darlings of autocracy together, for Prince Potemkin has given orders that your hospitality shall be both profuse and efficient. There is nothing to do but enjoy the limitless unfolding of an unknown landscape where even the degradation of multitudes becomes only an item of the picturesque. Convicts chained in gangs are working in the street as Lady Craven passes by. A Jew is thrust out of his house to give Lady Craven a night's lodging. Cossacks are commanded into mock combat for her entertainment, while military governors delight to arrange for the peasantry to sing their native songs. Nevertheless, or because of this, it is a Pleasant Voyage.

However, whether the stories collected here are of shipwreck or champagne, they can be judged by one criterion of excellence only; for the compiler has barred the test of historical interest or importance. That criterion is the narrator's ability to revive the impression of an unforgettable scene. The Emperor of China on a hunting expedition, a storm-beaten ship moving

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slowly towards England with the Duke of Albemarle's richest hangings "curiously painted in oyl colours" for tarpaulins, or the American Indian princess who was presented with knives and scissors, and hung them round her neck and in her hair—these remain in the mind for their quality as a spectacle. Where this quality is lacking even the most general reader may feel that a little more editorial intrusion into the book would have brought an additional reward.

J. W. STOYE

SAMUEL BUTLER

Samuel Butler. By G. D. H. COLE. *Home and Van Thal.* 6s.

This new short life of Samuel Butler is one of the two first books to be published in an English Novelists Series, and allowing for the temperamental difference between writer and subject, Professor Cole has used his space ration very well. "He knows everything—he knows nothing: he is a poet": so Butler was described even more shortly by his mistress, Lucie Dumas. She was not thinking of "O God O Montreal!" Festing Jones felt that, "author of *Erewhon*" distinguished him best from the other Samuel Butlers. Then when twenty years ago Dr. Joad came to write about him (and an admirable account it is), he had most to say about the creative evolutionist, Darwin's challenger. To Professor Cole, Butler is all these things, including the poet; only the terms of reference being what they are, it is to be expected that he should put his stress, if anywhere, on *The Way of All Flesh*, and this he does.

For of course it is on this classic book, which with all its discursiveness is, in atmosphere, a period piece—its author being, Cole says, a typical product of the period—it is on his much revised, posthumous book that Butler's reputation as a novelist depends. How it can be so constantly refreshing is something of a mystery. One might suppose that the peculiar Victorian parent-child relationship against which Butler reacted was as dead a theme as the motifs of Ibsen's more topical plays. It is not so, partly because parents will go on being potential tyrants till we get a platonic republic, and we need neither be renegade Plymouth Brethren to be moved by Gosse's *Father and Son* nor children of the manse of any denomination to find *The Way of All Flesh* arresting. The book lives, and qualifies for immortality, chiefly by its tonic acidity. There could hardly be a better illustration of Blake's "damn braces." It has other remarkable features—reading as if it really had happened, which a good deal of it had, and being addressed to the reader in an unaffected, personal way, in contrast to the contemporary Meredith's brilliant but how much more dating rhetoric. The acidity is the thing: not the bitterness of cynicism, which in its literary distillations is usually velvety, and relaxing rather than bracing. Butler was far from being a thorough-paced cynic, nor was he *sauvage*, like the tough writers of this century, who make a point of ignoring our sensibility. He even found philosophical reasons for making Ernest, in *The Way of All Flesh*, satisfied to have been the son of the parents who had led him such a miserable boyhood. Butler was an optimist, a believer. Cole analyses passages in *The Way of All Flesh* that can be made to reveal what he *did* believe. One, at any rate, of these articles of faith is stated in the clearest terms in chapter eighty-five, where the narrator quotes Ernest's views on the importance of being well-bred. It may be that Butler shared with Strindberg an exaggerated notion of what was owing to middle-class artists and men of letters, but when it comes to breeding he thinks and feels as an evolutionist, not as a snob; as, so to speak, an *applied* evolutionist: a eugenist—for Butler's mind was set on human values.

We look with interest for Cole's remarks on the theories of evolution. They turn out to be rather on the cautious side, though friendly, as when he says that "Butler attacked Darwin's position not because it was bad science, of which he was no judge, but because in his view it was bad human philosophy. . . ." What follows seems to me hardly strong enough, no doubt because I am one of those to whom the author of *Erewhon* and *The Way of All Flesh* is less the man of genius than that independent thinker who, in a dark moment, affirmed the freedom of will working through unconscious memory to a humanly intelligible end. The assiduity with which he picked over Darwin and Weismann to find admissions favourable to his hypothesis is a delight. Like Darwin again, Dr. Julian Huxley has brushed aside Butler (and the Shaw of *Methuselah* too) in little more than a sentence. All the same, at the end of *Evolution* Dr. Huxley, with a scientific punctilio that one is afraid Butler would not have appreciated, allows that telepathy and other extra-sensory activities of mind have now got to be taken into account. This would have gratified Butler. We need not be too apologetic for his excitement over those guinea-pigs of Brown-Sequard's which appeared to behave with indifference to orthodox genetics. (Quite lately some humble waxmoths were still keeping the tattered Lamarckian flag flying.) It is as a philosophical psychologist that he remains a lively influence. He postulated a continuous ego working through the generations: modern psychology gives us a continuous, extra-temporal mind. The two hypotheses may come to be reconciled in a single system grounded on fact, but even if they do not, it does not mean that Butler's faith in the kick and cunning of immanent life will ever be belied. What he said of one of his biological books goes for all: they are directed against "the mindless, mechanical, materialistic view of nature."

In spite of the coolness I am alleging that Professor Cole shows for these books, his new biography makes an excellent introduction to Butler, the English novelist.

PAUL BLOOMFIELD

AT HIGH LEVEL

Comes the Reckoning. By SIR ROBERT BRUCE LOCKHART. *Putnam.* 18s.

Bruce Lockhart might well have been a model for the hero of one of John Buchan's later romances. He is a Scot who belongs to the English governing classes, with a passion for fly fishing, the countryside, adventure. In the 1914 war he lived dangerously in the rapids of the Russian revolution; in the late one, his own part in which is the substance of *Comes the Reckoning*, he was condemned, by his own sense of duty, to the less exciting terrain of Whitehall. This, too, is a Buchan *milieu*, bounded by Westminster and the Clubs, where, if history is not actually made, anecdotage and gossip about those who are making it is passed round with the port: where Heads of Departments gravely quote "the Minister"; where Mr. Churchill is always referred to as the "P.M."—and has always just uttered another *mot*; where Air Marshals banter Admirals for being obsolescent, and decorations are measured on some private, inside scale ("He got one of the best D.S.O.s in the last war"). -

This is the window from which Sir Robert (as we must now call him) looks out upon his war. Always an enemy of appeasement, he was first appointed liaison officer to the exiled Czech Government, and he relates the shabby human story of their fight for recognition which it took

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some two years to achieve: "a tragic illustration," as he remarks, "of the dislike men feel for those whom they have wronged." When that was put right, he moved to a deputy Under-Secretaryship in charge of propaganda. But it is less the details of his work that hold our interest; it is the Scene and the Tone. Sir Robert found himself in every crisis at some vantage point—at the Admiralty with Mr. Alexander at the time of Dunkirk; at Cherkley with Lord Beaverbrook on the day of the attack on Russia. Inside views of history in the making commonly come from journalists. But this is an inside view in a double sense; it is an English Gentleman's view of the English from the inside, and so it is the very core of the Englishness at the centre of things that we get. What, for instance, could be more thoroughly characteristic than this little anecdote about 1940. Lord Halifax had persuaded Lord Gort to give an address in the B.B.C. religious service on August 4th.

Lord Halifax had taken great interest in this special service and had worried his secretaries for weeks. He had given even his own personal time and study to the choice of a suitable hymn and, finding decision difficult, had consulted his favourite henchman, Mr. Charles Peake.

"I am at a loss to find a suitable hymn for the Gort Service," said Lord Halifax.

"Surely," replied the gallant Mr. Peake, "the choice is obvious: O Gort, our help in ages past."

His Lordship reflected for a moment. Then a pale and watery smile lit up his face.

"Excellent, my dear Charles, but I fear the Prime Minister might not like the second line."

Squeeze that little story and the very essence of our behaviour, so baffling to foreigners, is distilled. *Comes the Reckoning* is full of such.

Sir Robert conducts us behind those long windows that we ordinarily look at only from the tops of buses; he pushes open those doors before which we might otherwise stand only among the knot of sightseers. The figures inside (except for the Old Volcano bubbling dynamically away at the centre) may diminish somewhat on the nearer view; but they become remarkably real in their setting, this traditional decorous, gentlemanly world of the governing classes, so unlike any other in the world. No bodyguards here; no bribes or bands; the minimum of publicity, pomp or blah. Fireworks (Mr. Brendan Bracken) may rocket you to the top, but it is personality or "character," that favourite English imponderable, that finally tells; and which these circles have known so well how to assess (except in the years of The Great Disgrace between the wars, the years of the Failure of the Nerve). The author himself displays in asides his own possession of "character," but in an older (though no less English) sense than Dr. Arnold's. Typically, for instance, he records how at one period he was feeling peculiarly low, self-distrustful and self-condemning. He retires, disgruntled, to bed with a book, and the choice is—Petronius's *Satyricon*; and, what is more, he manages to find in that epicurean story just what he is looking for—a warning against subservience to higher officials and Ministers. To the gifts common to his kind—charm, ease and courage—Sir Robert adds cultivation, a good memory for an anecdote and an easy style; these combine to give a most agreeable glimpse behind the scenes.

THOMAS SMALLBONES

LITTLE MOUNTAINS

Mountaineering in Scotland. By W. H. MURRAY. *Dent.* 18s.

Climbing in the British Isles has so far failed to inspire a book which the mountain fraternity can accept as a classic, but *Mountaineering in Scotland* may one day be acclaimed as such. This is Mr. Murray's first book but apart from an occasional trite phrase (i.e. "avoided like the plague") there is nothing amateurish about his writing. He can grip the reader with a thrilling story of mountain adventure and charm him by delicate word painting of mountain scenery. He does not treat the British mountains as a mere training ground for Alpine adventure, but it is perhaps no accident that so much of his Scottish climbing should have taken place in winter when the snow adds to the beauty and apparent height of the Scottish mountains and ice in their gullies further diminish the difference between Alpine and Scottish climbing. Mr. Murray is one of the first to exploit the possibilities of ice as an ally rather than as an obstacle: by cutting steps up rock pitches inaccessible in summer but just, if only just, climbable when fretted with ice. No climber has described more vividly the merciless enmity of an ice-sheeted gully at dusk, and the slow and desperate advance up ice-fretted rocks.

I managed to move up a foot, then, unexpectedly, another foot. The ice became thicker. There followed three-quarters of an hour of continuous cutting, a race with ebbing light. The angle was too high, and therefore balance too delicate to permit any weight behind these axe-blows. I had to peck away, using one hand from the wrist, trying to hew holds wherever allowed by rock bulges and brittle ice, which cropped up with a kind of inevitability, always in the wrong place.

The Scottish mountains are small by Alpine standards, but it would not be easy to survive a Cairngorm blizzard. Only experienced mountaineers, masters of route finding by compass, could have escaped with their lives from the adventure so graphically described in Chapter 21. Many new climbs are described in this book, the most notable perhaps being the first ascent of the Clachaig Gully, which had been previously attacked without success about twenty times in the course of fifty years.

A reviewer in *The Church Times* complained that Mr. Murray "shares with certain other great climbers the fantasy of a mountain mysticism that mingles extreme ascetic effort and intense aesthetic experience with purity of kind and soul." But why is it a "fantasy" to suggest that the beauty which is timeless and transcendent is sometimes revealed in the beauty which fades as for instance in mountain beauty? Again, if extreme asceticism be, as all the great mystics agree, the price to be paid for the vision of ultimate reality, why should not the mild ascetism of the mountaineer earn for those who practise it a few crumbs from the table of the true initiate?

Mr. Murray makes no exaggerated claims. "A man of balanced intelligence will not make a religion of mountaineering nor will he fail to be brought face to face with it." Of Alpine religiosity, emotion unclarified by thought, there is no trace in this sincere and moving book.

> Those fairest forms of the mountain way, are they all that is spread out for us to read on the high places of the earth? Something in that night cried out to us, not low, nor faltering, but clear, true, urgent—that this was not all: that not half the wonder had pierced the clouds of our blindness; that the world was full of a divine splendour, which must be sought within oneself before it might be found without: that our task was to see and know.

If this be, as the reviewer cited above suggests, mere fantasy, it is not only those whose faith in spiritual reality has been fortified on the mountains who will be involved in this sweeping condemnation.

ARNOLD LUNN

Democratic Government and Politics. By J. A. CORRY. *Oxford University Press.* 21s.

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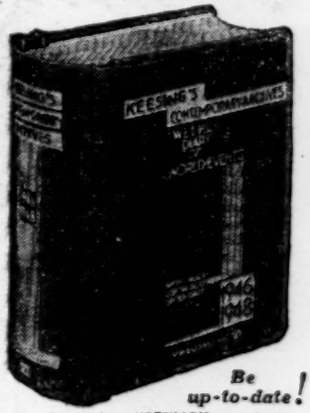

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Week-end Competitions

No. 926

Set by Thomas Smallbones.

The tradition of polished congratulatory verse-writing seems to have failed on the present occasion. Competitors are invited to remedy the deficiency with a sonnet for Princess Elizabeth on the occasion of her marriage. Entries by Dec. 2.

RESULT OF COMPETITION No. 923

Set by John Cauliflower

The usual prizes are offered for a poem entitled *A Peer's Lament* on the proposal to limit the powers of the House of Lords. Length 12 lines.

Report by John Cauliflower

This competition was an invitation to do homage to Sagittarius and all responded. "Peers, idle Peers," began Guy Innes and that was the kind of lead in that everyone sought. And there was the refrain, too, to think of. D. W. Hutchings took me by surprise with his

"Woolsack, woe and well-a-day."

As for the sentiments there were sad Lords, glad Lords, Lords exasperated and—if there is such a word—Lords in-aspirated. Good entries came from D. I. Swann, Baron Bradwardine, H. A. C. Evans, R. J. P. Hewison, J. C. B. Date and G. W. Jones. The first prize of four guineas goes to Joyce Taylor. Mary Drewery, Guy Innes, D. I. Swann and G. W. J. have ten shillings each.

FIRST PRIZE

O, the strawberry leaves are fading; and they're digging in the Park
For the coal they need so badly, and they also bore for oil
In the earth my forebears won me, in my own ancestral soil
Where the couples wander nightly, 'mid the slag-heaps in the dark.
O, the strawberry leaves are dying. They are digging in the Park
Where the deer was running blithely when I came to twenty-one;
And the Trust has got my castle, and the Germans got my son,
And our House is going downhill, to oblivion, to the dark.
O, the strawberry leaves are withered. They are digging in the Park.
Now the hounds are near their quarry, they are baying for the Lords;
We are going down the river, we are merging with the hordes,
For this House is slipping downhill, to the dogs, and to the dark.

JOYCE TAYLOR

The waters run by Runnymede
Mingling with our tears,
Our present loss was England's need
When England wept by Runnymede,
When England wept but signed the deed
That made us England's peers.
The waters rise by Runnymede,
The power our fathers gained
Now passes to a lesser breed,
But none shall say that I agreed
Recording angel—Hansard—heed
From voting I abstained.

G. W. J.

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A (Scottish) PEER'S LAMENT

(With abject apologies to the late Jane Elliot).

I've heard guid debate there, in the Upper Chamber,
Bonnie rhetoric oft have I heard in my day.
But now there's nae gabbing, but sighing and sabbing—
The power o' the Peers is a' wede away.

Nae mair o' postponing, nae mair veto owning,
Nae eilin' the Commons' wi' twa years' delay.
'T will be a' revising and mere criticising—
The power o' the Peers is a' wede away.

Dool and wae for the new Bill; our pride 't will imperil.
The Socialist Party has like wan the day.
The power o' the Peers that's been wi' us for years,
Trump card o' the Tories, is a' wede away.

MARY DREWERY

TIMOR MORTIS CONTURBAT NOS.

PEERS, *idle* Peers? I know not what you mean!
Shall we, submerged in a defined despair,
Be fobbed from our hereditary scene,
With bare twelve months wherein to sit and stare?
Alas, we strove to serve you: on our shelves
No urgent legislation gathers dust;
And, since we have done justice to ourselves,
Authority must all the more be just.
Shall the VOTE conquer? Is the VETO gone?
Surely our cause the ample past may plead?
Remember what we wrested from King John!
Recall what we achieved at Runnymede!
England hath need of us: shall not these tears
Melt the Administration's heart of stone?
If you must halve our pitiful two years,
Spare us a Magna Carta of our own!

GUY INNES

Woe! We have been debeguiled, distempered!
Lowly common mandibles, preaching to the low-born brood,
Incapacitated, inefficient,
Scowling forth perjuries against their Lord Class,
Garrulously-inallighant! Confound your prejudusing!
Two-years-a-bill, two-years-a-bill,
That's all there was for the Earl of Jezebel—
And they want that too, sez Hell!
No, frayed-unionists, dullards, lollards, parva-carttians,
I shall fight until the architecture falls above Us,
Though woe! why have you set to storm the last Bastil
Where ermined reigns Burke's Wisdom's Citadel?

D. I. SWANN

Would Arthur Osborne, "Petty Officer," and Kenneth Chester please send their addresses.

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Appointments Vacant

None of the vacancies in these columns relates to a man between 18 and 50 inclusive or a woman between 18 and 40 inclusive unless he or she is excepted from the provision of the Control of Engagement Order, 1947, or the vacancy is for employment accepted from the provision of that Order.

APPLICS. invited from British subjects for Male Assistant Labour Adviser in Colonial Office. Candidates should have substantial exp. and a thorough understanding of labour conditions in one or more of the territories for which His Majesty's Government are responsible, as well as a wide general exp. in this country in relation to the organization of labour and the development of the social services. Salary, £1,220 p.a. Candidates must have been born on or before August 1, 1917. Form of applic. from Secretary, Civil Service Commission, Burlington Gardens, London, W.1, quoting No. 2038. Applic. forms must be returned to him by Dec. 4, 1947.

NATAL University College (University of South Africa). Applics. invited for post of Senior Lecturer in English (in Durban). The sal. will be on scale £600×£25—£900 (women £550×25—£725) plus current cost of living allowance. The initial sal. will be determined in accordance with the qualifics. and exp. of the successful applicant. Membership of the University Teachers' Provident Fund is compulsory. This involves a contribution of 6 per cent of pensionable sal. which may shortly be increased to 7 per cent. The appointment will be in the first place for a probationary period of 1 yr. Successful applicant will be expected to take up his duties in March, 1948, or as soon thereafter as possible. The duties will include week-end lectures to Indian and Bantu students. Further partics. from Secretary, Universities Bureau of the British Empire, 8 Park St. W.1. Closing date for receipt of applications is Nov. 30, 1947.

COUNTY Borough of Southampton. Applics. invited from qualified Psychologists and Psychiatric Social Workers for appointments which are to be made in connection with establishment of a Child Guidance Centre in Southampton on January 1, 1948. Salary for the Psychologist will be £575, rising by annual increments of £25 to £650 p.a., plus cost of living bonus, at present males £60 and females £48 p.a. Salary for the Psychiatric Social Worker will be in accordance with Joint Negotiating Committee Scale of Salary £370, rising by annual increments of £20 to £530 p.a. Application forms may be obtained from H. C. Maurice Williams, Medical Officer of Health, Civic Centre, Southampton, and should be returned by Nov. 29, 1947.

L.C.C. Psychiatric Social Workers reqd. at Banstead Hospital (for nervous and mental disorders), Sutton, Surrey. Candidates must hold Mental Health Cert. of London School of Economics or equivalent qualific. Will be reqd. to co-operate with medical staff in investigating history of mental cases and supervising social welfare of patients. Salary scale, £370 rising to £530 p.a. (comm. salary according to exp.). For applic. form send s.a. foolscap env. to Medical Officer of Health (MHS/B), Public Health Dept. (Mental Health Services), County Hall, Westminster Bridge, S.E.1. (3287.)

NORFOLK Educ. Ctee. Child Guidance Service. Applics. invited for appointment of two Psychiatric Social Workers. Salary £350 p.a., rising to £530 p.a. by annual increments of £20. Candidates should hold an approved Certificate or Diploma. Previous exp. taken into account in determining commencing salary. Successful candidate will be reqd. to pass a medical exam. and to contribute in accordance with provisions of Local Govt. Superann. Act, 1937. Further details and applic. forms from W. O. Bell, Chief Educ. Officer, County Educ. Office, Stracey Rd., Norwich.

L.C.C. Physiotherapist (woman) (full or part-time) reqd. at Sutton Emergency Hospital, Brighton Rd., Sutton, Surrey. Sal. (full-time) £340 rising to £400 p.a. Part-time sal. pro rata plus 10 per cent. Commencing sal. according to exp. Must be registered with Chartered Society of Physiotherapy. For application form returnable by Nov. 30, send s.a. foolscap env. to Med. Officer of Health (MHS/I), Public Health Dept. (Mental Health Services), County Hall, Westminster Bridge, S.E.1. (3262.)

EDUCATIONAL Centres Assn. invites applics. for position of General Secretary. Applicants must be graduates with wide exp. of Adult Education, administrative ability, some knowledge of finance, and must be good public speakers and persuasive advocates of pioneering work. Salary up to £800 p.a., plus superannuation, according to qualifics. and exp. Letters to Chairman, Educational Centres Assocn., 8 Endsleigh Gardens, London, W.C.1. Last day for applics. Nov. 29, 1947.

PORTSMOUTH Mental Health Service. Applics. invited for post of Psychiatric Social Worker. Candidates must possess Mental Health Cert. of the London School of Economics or Edinburgh Univ. Pref. given to those with exp. in Child Guidance work. Successful candidate will be reqd. to pass a medical exam. and to pay superann. contributions under the Asylums' Officers Act. Incl. salary, £370 p.a., rising by annual increments of £20 to £530. The Portsmouth Mental Health Service includes: Child Guidance Clinics, and Hostel, large psychiatric out-patient clinics and Mental Hospital; also community care for mental defectives living in the city. Applics., stating age, qualifics. and exp., together with two recent testimonials, should be sent to Dr. Thomas Beaton, Physician-Supt., St. James Hospital, Portsmouth, as soon as possible. Applics. for Mental Health Course Students, now in training, will be considered.

Appointments Vacant—continued

THE Council of Industrial Design reqs. a Chief Public Relations Officer. Qualifications needed are a knowledge of industrial design, a University degree, proved ability to write, and the necessary exp. to control information services, press publicity and production of publications and visual material. Age 30-50. Starting salary £1,350, rising to £1,700. Applics. in writing to Establishment Officer, Council of Industrial Design, Tilbury House, Petty France, S.W.1. Applicants who have applied previously for posts may send a brief note drawing attention to their papers.

B.B.C. invites applics. for Assistant (Programmes) in English Section, Far Eastern Service. Duties: Preparation in simplified English of daily news bulletin, and selection and rewriting of general talks for translation into Japanese and other Far Eastern languages. Qualifics.: Wide, cultural and pref. academic background essential; candidates should have news sense and/or slight news exp., and if possible some knowl. of or interest in Far East generally. Sal. is on grade rising by annual increments of £40 to max. £890 p.a. Detailed applics. to Appointments Officer, Broadcasting Hse., W.1, marked "Assistant English, N. Stn.," by Nov. 29. For acknowl. encl. s.a.e.

NATIONAL Federation of Young Farmers' Clubs. Applics. invited to fill a vacancy at Headquarters caused by retirement. Person appointed, man or woman, must be fully qualified to assist the Education Officer with projected educational development, publications and editorial work. Salary: Men, £600-£10-£700; women, £530-£10-£630. Superannuation scheme. Partics. of age, previous exp., etc., the names of three refs., and, if desired, copies of testimonials, should be sent to: Secretary, N.F.Y.F.C., 55 Gower St. London, W.C.1, by Dec. 1, 1947.

FRIENDS' School, Great Ayton, N. Yorkshire. Wanted in Jan., 1948, a resident Secretary (woman). Applicants should have a good working knowledge of accounts in addition to the usual secretarial attainments. Apply, stating age, qualifics. and exp., to the Headmaster, who will supply full partics.

OXFORD House in Bethnal Green. Applics. invited for post of Head. Graduate of Oxford or other Univ. preferred. Duties: To maintain the original Christian purpose of the Oxford House, to act as Warden of a centre for social, cultural and educational activities, to take charge of residential settlement, to supervise training in social contacts for members of all professions. Sal. £500 p.a., plus board and lodging. Applics. to Secretary, Oxford House, Mape St. London, E.2.

PETERBOROUGH Joint Education Board. County Grammar School for Girls. Reqd. in Jan., or as soon as possible afterwards, a Senior Science Mistress with Hons. Degree in Biology or Zoology to be responsible for teaching of Science in this School of 500 girls. Subsidiary Chemistry or Physics would be an advantage. Sal. in accordance with Burnham Report, together with allowance for special responsibility. Applic. forms from Leslie Tait, Town Hall, Peterborough, to be returned as soon as possible to Headmistress at School.

BRADY Boys' Club, Durward Street, London, E.1, reqs. full-time Club Leader/Secretary. The Club has a membership of approx. 250 Jewish boys and is one of the leading Youth organisations in East London. The position is a responsible one carrying commensurate salary. No living accom. available. Write in first instance, giving full partics., to J. M. Sebag-Montefiore, Southampton Lodge, Fitzroy Park, N.6.

DERBYSHIRE Educ. Ctee. Applics. invited for post of Organiser to develop Youth Service in N.E. Derbyshire. Duties may include informal adult educ., including community associations. Sal. will be Burnham Assistant Teacher Scale with special responsibility allowance of £50 provided successful candidate possesses teaching qualifics. or other qualifics. deemed by Authority to be of equal value. Travelling expenses will be paid at County Council's scale. Form of applic. and further partics. from Director of Education, County Youth Service, 25 St. Mary's Gate, Derby, to be returned by Nov. 29.

SHERWOOD (Co-Educ.) Community School, Epsom, reqs. in Jan. Assist Matron.

MATRONS (two) wanted half-term Elmtrees School, Great Missenden, Co-ed. 3-5 and 5-10. Principal, Miss M. K. Wilson.

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Appointments Vacant—continued

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Appointments Wanted

DOCTOR'S wife, social science degree, speaks Dutch, Afrikaans, German, wants interesting part-time occupation. Write Read, 14a Stanley Rd. Sutton, Surrey.

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